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LETTERS

FROM

CANNES AND NICE

BY

MARGARET MARIA BREWSTER,

AUTHOR OF "WORK, OR PLENTY TO DO, AND HOW TO DO IT;" "SUNDAYS IN THE COTTAGE;"
"LITTLE MILES AND HER FOUR PLAYFELLIES;" "THE MOTHERLESS BOY;" ETC. ETC.

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P R E F A C E.

I FEEL that no small apology is due in the present day of travels far and wide, for intruding upon the attention of the public these "Letters," descriptive of such limited and well-known localities. The only excuse that I can give is, that I felt exceedingly the want of a guide-book to the neighbourhood of Cannes, even "Murray" being almost silent on the subject ; and having heard many complain of the same deficiency, I ventured to arrange and publish the Journal Letters I had written from thence, adding whatever information I could afterwards collect, for the purpose of making my little book a more intelligent companion for invalids and tourists. To the kind friend whose graceful and spirited pencil has so ably illustrated the beautiful scenery around Cannes, I would return very grateful thanks ; and also to those other friends who have so materially aided me with books and information.

M. M. BREWSTER.

GRAFTON VILLA, TORQUAY,
October 10th, 1857.

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LETTERS FROM CANNES AND NICE.

LETTER I.

HÔTEL BRISTOL, PLACE VENDÔME, PARIS, *October 20, 1856.*
—Here I am, sitting beside a cheery little wood-fire, this cold but bright October morning. Our passage across the Channel was a most pleasant one,—the water so smooth and blue,—both shores so distinct,—sails and sea-birds and little ripples so white and gleaming in the summer-like sunshine, and one's heart dancing the while with the sort of exhilaration which I do not think that any other scenery produces but that of the fresh sunny sea. Leaving the rest of my party at St. Omer, I came on to Paris with my maid. I had also as *compagnon de voyage*, a gentleman with raven tresses,—eyes like pieces of jet,—complexion the palest olive colour,—cloak thrown on with inimitable grace,—very tall, very grand, very picturesque, very melancholy. I had settled as far back as Dover that he must be an exiled chief, or a Hungarian con-

spirator, or perhaps an Italian patriot. At last we entered into conversation. Alas! he turned out to be polite, good humoured, useful, but *not* heroic! He was a Spaniard of South America, straight from California, where he had evidently found a good many nuggets. That man *ought* to have been a hero, but then people are so seldom what they ought to be.

There was a certain pleasurable feeling of independence as H. and I rattled along in the omnibus from the station, accountable to nobody but ourselves for being afloat in Paris at eleven o'clock at night. An exquisite moon shone down in strange solemn thought-inspiring contrast to the gay brilliancy of the streets, shops, and trees of the Boulevards; —it was difficult to realize that there were mines and volcanoes beneath, and that the bright surface was about as strong and secure as a flooring of egg-shells. Very kind, however, it was of the Parisians not to choose that particular Saturday night for an *émeute*.

My Sunday yesterday was a very curious contrast to the Sunday before. Then I was in Cambridge, that quaint, solemn, ancient place of learning. Then I listened to a most intellectual and finished discourse from the Hulsean lecturer, Mr. Goodwin, the greatest preacher belonging to the University. Then I sat in a pew only next door to that devoted to the ladies of "Noblemen and Heads," as carved upon the pew door. Was not that an aristocratic vicinity for my democratic self? "Heads," you must under-

stand, not being mere decapitated craniums, but “Heads of Colleges” abbreviated. Then I walked round that exquisite gem of architecture, Henry the Seventh’s Chapel, and listened to the organ rolling out hymns of adoration, and gazed at the light graceful ornaments of that temple—beautiful indeed, but all unlike the first temples of our faith. Then I passed into quadrangle after quadrangle so quiet—so silent—so ancient—a white figure in one of them looking deliciously desolate, sentimental, and ghost-like,—till I heard that it was one of the cooks, and then somehow the spell was broken. It was collegiate life in its stillest aspect, for only a few had gone up so early, and they seemed to move more slowly and solemnly than usual. My companion suited the scenes well; one of the most gifted minds I ever met—combining the depths of mathematics and other *awesome* lores with pleasant places for shallower capacities, and goodness added to the learning and the pleasantness. So much for one Sunday—now for yesterday. Some of my friends, both aristocratic and clerical, would turn up their eyes in horror, but I can trust your eyes to keep in their proper places. Well, H. had got a number of letters and addresses, in Paris and other places, to members of a religious sect called “Plymouth Brethren,” or, as they rather exclusively call themselves, “Christian Brethren.” I therefore set off with her yesterday afternoon, to help in that which, by the crossing of a narrow channel, had all at once become a difficult operation, viz., the use of one’s tongue! Having

a guide, we had no difficulty in finding M. Græzler, a tailor, and his wife, at the top of a long long stair, in a dark narrow street. Such a nice couple! he pale—very pale, and two sweet little children still paler, and a third in bed ill with small-pox, but the dear bright-faced wife, evidently the sunshine of the neat little dwelling of two rooms. He was a German, could speak French, but no English, and very bad his French was, and very difficult to understand; for instance, he pronounced a word exactly like our English word *penny*, and it was not easy to make out that he meant *bénit*. M. Græzler was just going to one of their *réunions*, so we put ourselves under his guidance, and away we went through very odd quaint-looking places, till we came to a dark passage, and then a common-looking room, with benches, and about forty people in it. Some were *ouvriers*, some tradespeople, some servants, and all looked respectable. In the centre there was a little table covered with a white cloth, on it bread and wine, covered with another cloth, for it is their custom to “break bread” every Sunday. A great many hymns were sung, two extempore prayers offered, two chapters of the Bible read, and a short but excellent sermon delivered by a soldier in uniform. Then the communion took place—they admitted me gladly; and as I read of a command to “Do this in remembrance of ME,” but no command that it must always be done in consecrated chapels, or by ordained hands, I was glad also. The whole scene had the aspect of a covenanting or Huguenot

conventicle, and one almost expected to see persecuting spears and morions at the dark entrance and narrow window. They profess to have no church, but it was clear that they had not escaped from what they consider the evils of a church. There will ever be the man of authority among them—the man, or the men, loving power. Better to have that weapon in the hands of those fitted by education to wield it wisely, and set apart from the bustle and business of ordinary life. Pleasant it is to meet on common ground with those of different minds on external points, yet I always return from my ecclesiastical aberrations with a warmer gratitude for the Church of our own land—of our Scottish hills and our old martyrs !

LETTER II.

FONTAINEBLEAU, *October 24.*—I expected to have been further on my way by this time, but we have had some distresses since I last wrote. I lost the whole of my party for twenty-four hours, which I spent in various pleasant speculations; the explanatory letter arriving, of course, some hours after they all “cast up” in safety. They have lost almost all their luggage, which they had sent from St. Omer in a dreadful conveyance, called, I suppose, with a melancholy attempt at jocularity, “*La Petite Vitesse*,” the slow speed of which we are now awaiting here. Was not that an excellent remark of an old Scotch lady, who said pathetically, on a somewhat similar occasion, “I can stand a’ sorts o’ pairtings but pairting wi’ my claes!” Before leaving Paris, I took L. to see *Notre Dame*, expatiating largely on its old grey grandeur, and the impression left on my mind long ago of the architect having “built his great heart into the stones,” to use the beautiful words of Longfellow. My horror and mortification were

great when a blaze of hideous colouring burst upon our vision,—columns, roofs, arches, windows, all disfigured by blue and green, yellow and red, pink and purple, and so on ; such patchy inharmonious colouring I never saw. I had quite forgotten the “restorations” at the time of the Prince’s christening. The new buildings at the Tuileries are very grand, and it is delightful to see the statues to the great men of France which decorate them—mostly raised by their own noble intellects from among the people. That must have been a popular measure, doing more honour after all to its deviser than to those thus honoured, for great minds need no monuments. It ought to be a lesson to us who have no statues, as it has been said by foreigners, but those of the Duke of Wellington and the Georges. The Zouaves, in their gay eastern dresses, add much of the picturesque to the Tuileries, besides thrilling one with Crimean recollections and sympathies.

We travelled from Paris to Melun with a priest, who interested me in spite of myself. I should like to see him again—I should like to know what was passing in his mind—I should like to know how much he believes of that strange delusion he professes to look on as a religion—how many yearnings after better, purer, simpler devotion possess him at those times, in the history of all minds, when truth flashes in, even though only by chinks and eyelet holes. Yet I am obliged to confess that this interesting priest had every appearance of being a *bon vivant*, exceedingly “jolly” look-

ing, in fact ; yet it was a grand face and a grander head—power and thought and marvellous decision.

I have been delighted with Fontainebleau, and saw the stately château in two aspects ; first, in the usual guide-ridden way, we went through its grand suites of apartments, rich with historical associations, and its spacious courts, and its old-fashioned gardens, and its decorated chapel, and thought, precisely in the right places, of Napoleon and Pope Pius vi., and Christina of Sweden, and poor Marie Antoinette and Louis xvi. ; but to-night there has come a noise, and a hurry, and a boom of many feet and many voices, and then a strange flushing red,—the palace is on fire, and we have been there watching that magnificent sight—the vast showers of sparks, and the shooting flames, and the lurid glare upon the grand old trees. It is now nearly extinguished, and no great harm is done. It broke out near the magnificent Salle du Bal, or Galerie de Henri ii., but the wooden communication was cut down, and as the wind is in the other direction, the palace, with its decorations and pictures, and Sèvres china, has escaped, and only the inferior chambers are destroyed. It was a very exciting, though a very orderly scene ; everybody was pressed into the service, two chains of men passing to and fro the buckets. The fire-engines were much smaller than the English ones.

We have been driving in the forest all day. Do you remember the magnificent tree, called the Bouquet du Roi ? an oak one hundred feet high and eighteen in circum-

ference, straight and stately, without a single branch up to the very top, where there is a magnificent crown of spreading foliage. We saw the weeping rocks also—not quite so lugubrious as the name led one to fear—and the renovating fountain, warranted to make you ten years younger if you only take one drink, while a second destroys the charm ; it is a very strong iron-spring, deeply coloured. But, oh ! the beauty of the valley that is close to the fountain, which to-day was in the perfection of autumn colouring ; and, oh ! the beauty of a little peasant girl, who stood in that valley in the perfection of childhood's fresh rosy charm ! The day has not been fine—all yesterday, however, it was much worse, if that is any comfort, inasmuch as there was a cold wet thick mist. It is still so cold that I dare not remain any longer, but go on with H. as far as Tonnerre.

You would be amused at my utter want of appreciation of French cookery, and the astonished looks of the garçons at the result of a deep study of the *carte*, which always ends in an order for something *au naturel*. Yesterday there was a sort of rebellion—they declared that the *potage au riz* was not ready, and that the *pommes de terres au naturel* were very bad ; a cowardly regard for public opinion made me consent to some horrible rich soup, and a ragout, and potatoes *à la maître d'hôtel*, but as I have gone back to-day to “*bœuf*, etc., *au naturel*,” it is evident that I am considered as hopelessly imbecile.

TONNERRE, *October 27.*—Well ! we two mites arrived here on Saturday night, and are the only English in this strange old quaint town of Tonnerre. We came by a late train—our luggage was the last to be extricated ; there was only one omnibus, which had departed ; but as an obliging man, with a wheelbarrow for our boxes, insisted on it that the Lion d'Or was *tout près*, we started boldly on our nocturnal walk, between avenues of trees, across green fields, up unpaved narrow hilly streets, getting always stonier, steeper, and narrower,—yes, it *was* very long that walk behind the wheelbarrow ! At last came a door and a light, towards which the man of the wheelbarrow politely waved us, he and our boxes disappearing at the same instant within a gloomy archway ; the door and the light appertained to a hideously dirty scullery, in the middle of which stood a tall black Meg Merrilies type of woman, who, much to H.'s horror and scandal, kept motioning to us in a "hail-fellow-well-met" kind of way, to be seated on the only two chairs of this dubious-looking apartment ; she evidently thought that we had come to call upon her, though she could not remember our names. In faint accents, and with pleasant visions of being trepanned, I inquired if this were really the Lion d'Or, the "best hotel at Tonnerre," to which I had been recommended ? A bustling landlady came forward to answer the question in person, and our troubles were soon over, though everything is in a remarkably primitive fashion. The *table d'hôte*, and its dishes and its com-

pany, are peculiar—there are brick floors, and only little round morsels of carpet, which you carry about with you, and there are abundance of patriotic fleas, disdaining any alliance with England, and disposed to extreme measures, though quite in a guerilla style of warfare. As to dear old Marie, the quaint ancient *fille de chambre*, who received us in the midst of those pots and pans and broken chairs, she has turned out quite a jewel—she cannot do enough for us—she is always poking her head in to know if anything is wanted—she goes into ecstasies at the sight of my worsted work, and she tells the history of her life, wiping her eyes with her apron, and finishing off with the comfortable assurance, which more people than Marie feel, though perhaps they don't say it, “*Je suis très-bonne, mais très-malheureuse.*”

Tonnerre is built on a hill, with many hills and vineyards all around, and there are beautiful views, and ancient wooden gables, and fine old churches, with grand Norman arches, which are yet not so grand as the beautiful Norman and Gothic architecture in the Forest of Fontainebleau. The tracery of the foliage, with its rich colouring, was finer than these stony arches and oriels.

Yesterday, according to my fashion, I went poking about by myself, and found out another church, quite different from the others. It is very ancient, belonging to an hospice founded by Mary of Burgundy, sister-in-law of St. Louis. Outside it is like a huge barn, and inside it is much the same, with a very lofty vaulted roof, and huge rafters across, and the whole

body of the church quite empty—only paved with tombstones, till quite at one end there is an altar, and also a few pews, and a *very* old dark chapel, and a magnificent statue of Mary of Burgundy. I never was so struck by any Roman Catholic church as by this one, from its simplicity and from its vast empty gloomy space, which gave one a feeling of awe—there was something rather weird-looking, too, in the mystic lines upon the tomb-paved floor, which were pointed out by the nuns with great pride and veneration. They were traced there in 1786, and are those of a gnomon or meridian line, for showing the varying altitudes of the sun. It is often drawn in churches in Italy, on account of the greater height of the roof, in which there is a small aperture for admitting the sun's rays. This spot of light varies every day according to the varying position of the sun in the meridian, travelling on for six months, and then travelling back on its bright beautiful path; and thus the height of the sun is marked upon the line on the floor, upon which are sometimes marked the signs of the zodiac. Any one familiar with the subject could, by calculation, find out the days of the month. There are no gnomons in English churches, I believe, and the nuns said that this was the only one in France—a privilege they valued accordingly. In the Church of St. Pierre, which stands on the top of a hill, there is another statue of Mary of Burgundy, who was the patron lady of Tonnerre. At the church door I made acquaintance with a very nice lady-like Frenchwoman, the wife of one of the officials of the railway, who was waiting to gain

admittance for a friend into the convent and hospital attached to the church, and she very kindly took me also under her wing. We went all over it, and a beautifully arranged and comfortable institution it is. The nuns are “Sœurs de la Charité,” who always present the best aspect of the Roman Catholic Church; it was very interesting to see them beside the sick-beds, so quiet and tidy and serene-looking, or surrounded by clinging groups of children, whom they educate. Yet such sad questions will intrude: What is their *motive*?—is it serving God or serving a system?—is it to help in bringing others to be saved?—or is it to work out their own salvation by their own merits? However, let us thank God for the education that *is* thus given—though it may be imperfect in kind and small in degree—for education is the only earthly key which can turn in the rusty locks of corruption and ignorance and mental degradation.

LETTER III.

Aix, *October 31*.—Much to my relief, a letter informed me of the safe arrival of the “claes,” after so long and mournful a separation. I therefore left Tonnerre by the express train on Monday afternoon. As we arrived at Lyons at eleven o’clock at night, and left before daylight the next morning, I saw nothing of it, which I regretted much ; and I only carried away a confused jumble of ideas and remembrances concerning martyrs and silk gowns. We thought it would be a pleasant variety, as the weather was fine, to take the steamer from Lyons to Avignon. One lives and learns ! Instead of a voyage of seven hours, as we were promised, we were on board a long dirty uncomfortable steamer,—intended for merchandise rather than for passengers, the small cabin of which was full of inveterate smokers, from six o’clock in the morning till nearly six o’clock at night. Then having twice stuck fast in the mud, and having been deplorably cheated by the cook, we were unceremoniously put on shore at St. Esprit, where we remained all night, and from whence we

went to Avignon by rail the next day, having had enough of the steamer. The beauty of the scenery, however, through which we passed, when the white mist of the Rhone rolled up its thick curtains, compensated for our discomforts. Mountains, hills, vineyards, purpling into the colour of our heather—picturesque old castles on perpendicular heights—strange rocks of every imaginable shape—quaint old French villages, and the broad beautiful Rhone itself, with its innumerable bridges. St. Esprit is a pretty town, with a very comfortable hotel, which, tired and cross as we were, we valued considerably more than the old castle, or even the magnificent bridge which is the pride of St. Esprit, and is said to be the longest stone bridge in the world ; it has twenty-three arches, and is three times as long as London Bridge,—it was built in 1310, a time of great prosperity, for Froissart speaks of the “very great wealth of St. Esprit in 1361, and that all the riches of the country thereabouts had been carried thither as to a place of safety, trusting to the strength of its castle.” Then came a reverse, and “a pitiful sight,” as Froissart goes on to say, for a band of freebooters, tempted by the stores of treasure, burst into the town and captured it ; and to give an idea of the horrors which followed, it is only necessary to tell you the title claimed by the captain of the horde,—“The friend of God and the enemy of all the world !” Miss Freer, the historian, makes one so at home with all her characters, that it gives a great interest to St. Esprit to remember that the lovely and fascinating Marguerite d’Angoulême and her

proud mother, Louise of Savoy, rested here for one night while Marguerite was on her way to attempt the rescue of her beloved brother, Francis the First, from his captivity in Spain—the “Trinity of France,” as those so fondly attached were then often named.

The difference in climate is most curious ; till within a few miles of Avignon it was wintry cold, but there we stepped into the midst of summer,—since then every morning rises on us bright and cool as our finest Septembers, while in the middle of the day it is July, without its sultriness, but with a sun so cloudless, so glowing, so direct in its rays, that it seems as if one had never seen sunlight before ; in the evenings again, it is sometimes sufficiently cool to make one enjoy a tiny woodfire. Now that we are *in vetturino*, we prefer travelling in the mornings and evenings, and resting during the heat of the day, which is too much for us Northlanders ; we sit outside, and the maids and children inside, and we have a comfortable carriage and conversable coachman. I was so sorry to stay only one day at Avignon, and not to have time for Vaucluse ;—what we did see made me long to stay for a fortnight. There is a magnificent collection of Roman antiquities found in the neighbourhood of Avignon or “Avenio,” which was a Roman colony ; and in the museum there are a few good pictures—one by David, “The Dying Republican,” I admired very much, and several by Horace Vernet, especially his “Mazepa.” He was born in Avignon, and his father and brother were both good painters. The old

man who was our guide through the antiquities caught quite eagerly at the name of a plant which I pronounced, and said, "Ah! you have the Latin pronunciation." When I told him that in Scotland we always pronounced so, and that it was only poor little England who couldn't speak properly, he was lost in admiration. About a quarter of an hour afterwards he suddenly asked me if I could speak English? Honesty compelled me to confess to doing so, which evidently seemed to diminish his respect,—however, I comforted him by uttering a volley of Gaelic; he could not understand how anybody, with a good pronunciation of the first letter of the alphabet, could possibly speak such an outlandish tongue as English!

We saw the palace of the Popes, of course, which is now a *caserne*, a transformation which would please the ghosts of those ancient Italians who likened Avignon, and the Pope's forced residence therein, to "Babylon and the Babylonish captivity." It is not now remarkable for any beauty of architecture, but is very imposing from the height of those old black walls, which are a hundred feet in height, and the towers a hundred and fifty feet. We did *not* see the chambers of the Inquisition—the hideous remains of which are deep and dark, down within the gigantic walls of that dwelling, of which a modern French author says, "On dirait la citadelle d'un tyran asiatique plutôt que la demeure du vicaire d'un Dieu de paix."* Neither did we enter Rienzi's tower, where he

* *Notes d'un Voyage dans le midi de la France.* Par M. Mérimée.

languished long, studying Livy and the Bible, and which he only left for his last short and miserably ended triumph at Rome ; but we looked at it with the interest and the tenderness of memory, which perhaps after all we owe more to Bulwer than to history. We saw the cathedral *Notre Dame des Doms* or *des Domns* ; and, oh ! that church, with its grand old gloom ! It was the first Roman Catholic church which almost impelled me to bow the knee. A great deal of it has been renovated, but there are some delicious old frescoes, and such an ancient porch ! If one could but believe guides, I should have no difficulty in telling you that it was Roman ; but, alas ! those terrible beings called antiquaries, step in and prove to one, in the most disagreeable way, that it was not Roman, and could not be Roman, though, one comfort is, that if not Roman they do not seem to know very well *what* it is. They kindly allow one to believe, however, that the church is old, and very old, and that it was repaired by Charlemagne. There are shown the tombs of two Popes, John xxii. and Benedict xii., and one could not help looking, and thinking, and wondering over them. When the bodies of these "vicegerents" slept underneath the dull cold marble, and their spirits had seen God, how long would last their dreams and dogmas of St. Peter's chair and keys and absolute government ? How long would they consider themselves as suitable representatives of the meek and lowly God-man, and his "College of Fishermen ?" Of course, we also saw the tomb, or rather monument, of Laura, which was broken down at the time of the Revolution,

but has been put together again, and would be very graceful were it not that a wretched Englishman has stuck it on a cockney-looking pedestal, with an inscription which might be quite suitable in the New Cemetery in Edinburgh, for Mr. John Smith, but not for Petrarch's Laura. The panoramic views of Avignon, and the wide surrounding country from the terraces near the palace, are quite magnificent. From thence there was pointed out to me something which appeared to be a faint white cloud, "no bigger than a man's hand," over the horizon very far away; I was told that it was an *Alp*, and I had faith enough to believe it, and to be thrilled by the word. I have enjoyed Avignon with an enjoyment quite peculiar to the seeing for the first time in mature years, the scenes which one dreamed of and longed to see in days very long gone by, and which is lost by those who have been in the habit of travelling during their youth.

Yesterday we rested at Pont Royal, where we were the only guests in its very antiquated and deserted hotel; that large gloomy *salle à manger*, with its many doors, and its solitary candle upon the long table, and the peculiar works of art decorating its walls, had a savour of banditti and Mrs. Radcliffe about it, and a slight suspicion of ghosts and ghostesses. Some matter-of-fact people might have thought it a worse misfortune, that there was no butter, no mutton, no beef,—they certainly made a great boast of poultry, but only two pigeons and a very small fowl made their appearance. We paid in proportion to the demand,

however, not to the supply. The country we passed through to-day was not so pretty as yesterday—very stony and bare-looking ; but every now and then we came upon oases of mulberries, and olives, and fig-trees.

To-night we are at Aix, the medicinal waters of which are rapidly rising into fashionable popularity. It looks very thriving, which is exceedingly provoking and ill-judged of it, considering its associations as the capital of Old Provence,—all its Provençal memories—its troubadours—its magnificent fêtes and tourneys—its good King René—and its grand old cathedral, built on the remains of the Roman temple of Apollo. We went into *that* after dark to-night, and all the trickeries and wretched fantastic mummeries were hidden in the gloom. One only came gently upon kneeling groups. Everywhere you turned there was the presence of devotion. A solitary light gleamed here and there ; and it was pleasant to forget for a while that those tapers were burning in honour of Mariolatry. There were masses of shadow, and the faint twilight coming through the old windows, and depths and heights of arched roofs and columns, which the eye could not penetrate in the solemn gloom.

There is a good statue of “ Le bon Roi,” by David, the young Parisian sculptor, which adorns the Grand Cours, along with three fountains, of which there are nineteen in the town. René is represented as holding in his hands the muscatel grape, which he introduced into Provence ; and at his feet are books, a palette, and musical instruments, to show

that he was poet and philosopher, painter and musician—a rare kingly combination. He wrote several books in prose as well as in verse, and kept up a correspondence with the *savans* of his time. Almost as rare was the deep affection which this dear old king seems to have excited. Everywhere you meet with traces of him, and of the love he won for himself. It is pleasant to think of him as resting here in his quieter Provençal capital, which he chose on account of its good climate and its comparative repose. All the associations of Aix are not, however, equally pleasing. Again and again was it ravaged by the plague, and by a worse pestilence—that of bigotry and intolerance. The persecutions of the Protestants were frightful both at Aix and in the surrounding district.

It has been a great comfort to me to-day, that I have seen a fat soldier and a thin priest. Generally, the poor soldiers look miserably thin and ill-fed, and as if they did all the fasting for themselves and the priests too. Nothing strikes one as a greater difference between the two countries, than the different aspect of their soldiers; ours, noble-looking, well appointed, well buckled in—models of order and discipline; and the French so completely the reverse—untidy, shabby, and slouching. When it comes to marching, and fighting, and suffering, however, such “sweet neglect” must be infinitely more pleasant and serviceable than the buckram and the “routine.”

LETTER IV.

LA BRIGNOLLE, *November* 1.—I am going to begin a letter to you in rather a melancholy plight. We have arrived at La Brignolle, where you must understand we had arranged to spend Sunday, having heard glowing accounts of its beauty and pleasantness, its charming gardens, and appropriateness for a resting-place. All I can say is, Never be tempted, under any circumstances, to stop at La Brignolle. The walls of my room are so peopled by certain brown entomological specimens, albeit in a state of repose, that any attempt to inhabit the beds would be insanity, and I am very ruefully watching the preparations for my night's repose, consisting in my travelling wraps spread on the brick floor, and my railway bag for a pillow! I don't feel in the least inclined to sympathize with the good spirits of Charles ix., who, in 1564, enjoyed “*grand plaisir de danse à Brignolle!*”

FRÉJUS, *November* 3.—Well, here we are, resting during the heat of the day, not very far from our journey's end, for

we shall be at Cannes to-night. We are hand-in-glove with Roman emperors, for the soil of this obscure little village has been trodden by Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Vespasian, and though last, not least, Julius Cæsar, who repaired the Forum, and gave it his own name, the Forum Julii. There are the ruins of a large Roman amphitheatre, which I have just been exploring, escorted by four little boys, all talking the most unintelligible *patois*, so that I cannot say they have added much to my antiquarian lore. It is the first amphitheatre which I have seen, and it realizes vividly the scenes described in *The Last Days of Pompeii*; the arena for the gladiators, the galleries for the Roman dames, the cages or dens for the wild beasts and condemned slaves, and surely many a martyr also has been torn to pieces there, for the south of France was a place of many martyrs. There is likewise a Roman aqueduct near the town, which we are to see on our way to-day.

Such a Sunday as yesterday was! unlike indeed our quiet Scotch Sabbaths. One night of La Brignolle was sufficient, and as another would have made me quite ill, we made a very early start, going on to Vidauban, the next stage, where we found a charming hotel. We spent the rest of the day there, leaving it early this morning. L. and I went to the little village church, as she had never seen a Sunday's service. There was scarcely anything but singing of the most inharmonious description. A priest was walking up and down, kneeling, bowing, and crossing himself, in a robe re-

sembling a dirtyish flowered silk dressing-gown, who did not exactly strike one as “ the right man in the right place.” There was an upsetting little boy in red and white, who economically puffed out a pair of candles which were illuminating a poor brass Virgin, and left them fizzing and smoking in her very face ; and there was a dams^{el} in a smart bonnet and polka, who lighted the rest of the candles, in rather an unclerical manner. Not a man was in the church, though one or two were at the door, but it was crowded with women and children, who chatted away about their ordinary business, and giggled and nodded to each other, every now and then gabbling and crossing themselves. We came away very soon, sad and sick of heart.

I forgot to tell you that the other day we stopped to rest the horses at a place called St. Maximin, where we visited the church—a very fine one—said to be the finest in Provence, solemn and grey as an English cathedral, but the side chapels more disfigured than usual, with gilding and lace, and artificial flowers. A man told us with great eagerness that they had some of St. Mary Magdalene’s bones, so down we went into a curious dark vault, where there were some really fine old tombstones, and a glass vase containing a large gilt hand and arm, in the centre of which was a little compartment containing a very small arm-bone of Mary Magdalene, who must have been a very small woman. I should not have been at all disgusted with the man for believing it, but I was disgusted with his evident unbelief, and yet hypocritical ap-

pearance of wonder and awe, and with the inconsistency of allowing such a sacred relic (if they believed it so) to be approached with the utmost irreverence by crowds of dirty boys and girls, who followed us into the little vault, thinking us much more wonderful relics than the saint's bones. The legend is, that Mary Magdalene, Lazarus and Martha, were exposed in an old boat on a stormy sea, and in process of time they were all thrown ashore at Marseilles. She announced the faith to its inhabitants, and then retired to the grotto of La Baume, near St. Maximin, where she died. A work in two large volumes is in progress, I am told, to prove the truth of her residence at La Baume.

I do wonder that for her own sake Rome does not make herself more dignified. She might do so much more harm to the Protestant Church by a little more solemnity—a little more refinement—a little less tawdriness,—a little less of the wax-doll and the tinsel, and the artificial flowers and the cotton lace. Two things a man must lose who becomes a pervert to Rome,—all sense of the ludicrous and all purity of taste, not to speak of greater losses.

Well, but I must go back to my Sunday. It seems so long ago that I can scarcely believe it was only yesterday! It was of course a fête-day, and the first village one I had seen—and see and hear it one could not fail to do, for our rooms looked out upon it all. I have been struck by the want of merriment and light-heartedness, not only among the people here, but in Paris, and at several fêtes we have seen.

It seems as if the French were learning of the English to "take their pleasure sadly after their fashion," as Froissart says. I wonder if it is a sign of the times. Perhaps the volcanic elements beneath are becoming too perturbed to allow of the old smiling surface. Part of the amusements of the day consisted in a set of men dancing about the village, and under the old trees, to music, in a rough but not quite ungraceful measure, like the old French pictures. Nothing could be more orderly, and there was not a trace of drunkenness, but the whole gave one a strong feeling of their want of intelligence and education. What can you expect from people who spend their Sabbaths in such unintelligent worship, and in such frivolous amusements?

L. and I went to sit by the quiet river side, glad to escape from the noise. The river and the woods were so like the Bridge of Allan, that we could scarcely believe we were not there; but, by and bye, one or two little things showed us that we were *not* at the Bridge of Allan. A cart that would have driven a Scotch agriculturist mad,—a picturesque group in a rude ferryboat, which the old ferrywoman, in a droll flapping yellow hat, pulled across by means of a large rope fastened on either side, and the polite *bon jours* and smiles of welcome from the peasants, to the *dames Anglaises*, of whose arrival everybody seemed well aware. There is a beautiful new bridge nearly finished—always one of the first signs of progress and civilisation that one sees in the provinces.

In the evening we took a moonlight walk among some

vineyards, and gathered the “gleanings of the grapes,” which brought vividly before one the beautiful and tender consideration of that old command—“Thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard ; thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger ; I am the Lord.”* How pleasant it was to gaze quietly into the clearest, softest, rosiest evening sky that I ever beheld ! There was a “*canty*” old woman sitting at her door, and the bright blaze looked so pretty that I peeped in. There was a cheerful little fire, and a clean room, and a nice purring cat—in short, for all the world like an old woman and her cat in England, except that there the old woman would have had rheumatism from sitting outside in a November night, and wouldn’t have been so polite.

You will wonder all this time how I get on in the process of murdering the Imperial French. I have a thorough natural incapacity for any other language than my own, still, as I have not a “grand talent pour le silence,” I manage to make myself understood more or less ; but I often see a look of tender compassion soften the countenances of my auditors, as I hurl at their heads an inextricable mass of verbs, genders, and literal-minded Anglicisms. It is a painful sign that no one has ventured to pay me the almost invariable French compliment, “*Vous parlez Français très-bien*,” except, if I remember right, a railway porter, who wanted a franc, and a beggar who had just got a sou !

* Lev. xix. 10.

I have been much struck during our journey by the apparent sterility of the south of France, which is often very arid and uncultivated-looking; but it is the very riches of the land which gives it that appearance,—the vines, olives, almonds, cork-trees, and mulberries, having all a wild straggling aspect: not sufficiently uncultivated to be picturesque, they are yet too much so to look rich and fertile. At Avignon one sees many indications of southern climes; it seems as if you had suddenly stepped into another region, so different is it in all ways from Northern France. The rich bronzed colouring of the faces, and the dark eyes and hair,—and the Italian terminations in the *patois*,—and the huge handsome oxen yoked in the ploughs,—and the bright crimsons and yellows which one thankfully still sometimes recognises in handkerchiefs, aprons, caps, and petticoats. Near Avignon, the women wear curious caps—white “*mutches*”* with a broad velvet band hiding every bit of white near the face; and all along the road the old women have large black straw wide—*very* wide-awakes, bound with black velvet, and the younger women generally white, light brown, or yellow ones, of the same shape.

CANNES, November 4th, HÔTEL DE LA POSTE.—Here we are at last. Yesterday's journey from Fréjus was enchanting, up among the mountains of the Esterels, which are the last spurs of the Maritime Alps. Glorious views on

* A Scotch word, signifying a close cap without a frill.

every side, and the blue blue Mediterranean, like a huge sleeping lake, the first sight of which gave another *thrill*. The mountains are really very grand ; tier after tier, amphitheatre after amphitheatre of hills all around ; some are green and round like the Ochils,—others conical, like the Eildons and Lomonds,—others jagged with fantastic shapes,—others pointed and Alpine-like. Several hours before we came to it, we saw far beneath us the snowy-white houses of Cannes lying on the very brink of the beautiful sea. We had a good many miles of plain to traverse, and a river to cross, the Siagne, over which there is an iron suspension-bridge. It was by moonlight that we at last arrived, and you cannot imagine anything so lovely as the reflection of the moon on the water, seen through the pale green foliage of the olives and cork-trees, which abound here. It seems a lovely spot, and there are many pretty villas, but as yet I have seen little, being in bed with a headache. From my window, however, I can see much that is bright and beautiful—bright sunlight on a clear blue bay, —a long line of Alpine hills of every imaginable shade of lilac,—a boulevard of trees,—a little pier and lighthouse, and a picturesque ruin-crowned hill. I know nothing of these yet, but soon they will be “familiar as household words.” There is much in the prospect of a new home, though only a temporary one, to make one ponder thoughtfully, sadly, and somewhat fearfully,—something like beginning to write on the first page of a blank journal.

LETTER V.

CHATEAU COURT, *November 7th.*—Cannes is the loveliest of all lovely places ! the sea so exquisitely blue—the sky so bright and cloudless—the rich sun upon the gleaming white houses so lovely in all its phases from the early roseate flush to the last glowing smile of evening—the Hill of Cannes, or the Mont Chevalier, crested with a square tower, and château in ruins, and an old church ;—“La Croisette,” a long point of land jutting out into the sea ;—the Isles of the Lérins just in front ;—and the subdued tints of the olive-trees, and the rounded heads of the orange-groves, laden at once with blossoms and with ripening fruit. It is a lovely scene ; perhaps still more beautiful last night in the moonlight, which was so clear that one could easily read by it ; and the hills, and sea, and olives, and oranges, were all exquisite in the purity of light and depth of shadow, while in the foreground the painted balustrades of this château, pink and white, and characteristically French by day, looked quite graceful and pictorial. Even

in the daytime, those olive-trees that one learns to love more than any other tree, look quite apart from the sunshine, and as if still touched by the silvery moonlight.

To give you an idea of the comparative clearness of this atmosphere, I must tell you that Lord Brougham made a calculation, and found that in *one hundred and eleven* days at Cannes, there were only *three* days in which he could *not* make experiments upon light, while at Brougham Hall, in *one hundred and eleven* days at the same season, there were only three days in which he *could* make those experiments !

The climate seems to me a very strange one—the air is wonderfully strengthening and exhilarating ; it seems as if at every inhalation one were drinking champagne ! Indeed, it is necessary to leave off all the stimulants that in England are considered necessary. As yet I have found it rather *too* exciting. On first coming here, invalids feel such wonderful strength and excitement, that it is scarcely possible to avoid being “*too well*.” Doctors at home are not careful enough in warning their patients of the great precautions that are necessary,—such as care to avoid over-fatigue, even when feeling able for long walks,—the prudence of carrying an extra shawl to put on when one of the rapid and frequent changes in temperature takes place,—the danger of being out of doors at sunset, or indeed for an hour before or after it,—and above all, the extreme caution which is necessary to protect the head from the sun. White umbrellas, wide

hats, lined with white paper, and thick veils, will be found not more than needful to preserve the head and forehead. From ignorance of these points, most people have seasoning illnesses. The weather has now become much colder—frost in the night and snow on the mountains; but notwithstanding it is strange how the irritation in weak chests and throats visibly decreases. In spite of the cold weather the mosquitoes continue to sail gracefully about, inflicting torture on new comers, and, it is said, on new comers only. They are such wicked cunning little wretches, that I really do believe they are possessed by a microscopic evil spirit. In your tranquil unbitten Scotch home you can have no idea of the social weight of mosquitoes. In the morning it is a subject of general conversation. “I *have* been bitten.” “*Hast* thou been bitten?” “He *has* been bitten,”—while everybody fights over again his battles of the preceding night, and there is a mute appeal for sympathy in the large spots and patches of a fine *couleur de rose*, which greatly increase everybody’s natural beauty. In the middle of the gravest conversation, perhaps about the principles of the Peace Society, one hears a voice exclaim in savage glee, “I’ve killed him;” or somebody suddenly makes an insane rush at an invisible object, and then quietly resumes the conversation, while the fatal and indescribable buzz is heard triumphantly aloft; or somebody else begins beating his head and breast in a tragic sort of way, as if he were determined, Samson-like, to immolate himself and his enemies at the

same time. What it must have been in the height of the season I can't imagine ; it is quite bad enough now, when they ought to be dead, if they had any conscience. However, I think the 10th of November is their day of doom. It is worth while knowing that the juice of a lemon is effectual in relieving the pain, irritation, and swelling of mosquito bites.

Yesterday we went through Lord Brougham's château ; it is built in the style of an Italian villa, and is very pretty with its light graceful pillars and balustrades, and vases of bright flowers. Strangers have still considerable facility of access to the library, but not so much as formerly, owing to the books having been carelessly used. The Château Eléonore Louise does not appear to advantage from the road ; the best view of it is from the windows of Mr. Evan's pretty villa, with a foreground of olives. There are memorial tablets placed above all the doors in the upper lobby, in memory of Lord Brougham's mother and only daughter.

We have taken a house about two miles from Cannes, called the Château Ste. Marguerite, the rent is 2500 francs for the season, which is for seven months, that is from the 1st of November till the 1st of June ; it is a great disadvantage here that you cannot take a house, not even the smallest lodging, except for the whole season. This year there has been a great demand for houses, many having been taken by telegraph, and the prices of course rising in consequence.

Half a house is let this season at a greater price than the whole house two years ago. Ste. Marguerite not being ready for me, I am paying a very pleasant visit in the meantime. There is rather an interesting story attached to the house in which I am staying. In 1840, a gentleman named M. Aymard Rollet, made his appearance at Cannes ; he was remarkably handsome and accomplished, and his manners were so engaging, that he soon became the *enfant chéri* of Cannes and its neighbourhood. He built this château, where he gave splendid entertainments, and, to crown his popularity, he engaged himself to marry a young Cannes lady, who was a proud and happy woman. He had lived here for a year and a half, occasionally absenting himself for a short time, when one morning very early two gendarmes appeared at his house, with an order of arrest. M. Rollet said that it must be a mistake. They showed him their instructions, which clearly indicated the proprietor of the château, and said that there might be some mistake, but as they could not explain it, they must do their duty. Vidocq, who was then head of the Paris police, had given them directions, at the same time adding, " You may catch him, but he will slip through your fingers," so that they were doubly on their guard. M. Rollet advised them to send over to Grasse, for directions from the superintendent of police, who would soon put it all to rights. He begged permission to get a box of cigars, and to give some directions to his servant in their presence, about some of his clothes, which he accordingly did ; then he went down

to the Hôtel Pinchinnat, where he was to be guarded till the arrival of the order to set him at liberty. He asked the gendarmes to breakfast. No—they could not eat in the presence of a prisoner. He offered them a cheroot, which they decided they might accept. Towards the end of the cigars, both gendarmes were found fast asleep. M. Aymard Rollet's horse and servant were unaccountably found outside of the window, and he was speedily mounted and away; not on the nearest road out of the country, but quietly and slowly on the road to Grasse, where in a short time he encountered the superintendent of police on his way to the Hôtel Pinchinnat. He reined in his horse, and told him that there was a great excitement down at Cannes—M. Rollet was arrested, but of course it must be a mistake. The superintendent said that it was no mistake, that M. Rollet was an escaped *forçat* from Toulon, who had now committed some fresh offence. The rider shrugged his shoulders, said that he did not believe it, and then went quietly on, up among the Grasse mountains, and from thence to Draguignan, passing himself off as a son of the receiver-general of the district, one of the richest men of the country. He arrived at Brignolle, with the gendarmes in full cry after him; found the *malle poste* just leaving the town, left his horse, and jumped into it; arrived at Avignon, where he belonged to a good *famille de la bourgeoisie*, went to a notary, sold his Cannes property to his sister, with all the regular forms, and disappeared.

From that day none knew anything more of that man's career, though it is supposed that he died in America about six or seven years ago. Neither is anything told of the poor heart that wondered and suffered, and probably broke at Cannes. Before the present proprietor, M. Court, bought this château, and gave it his own name according to the fashion of the country, it was always called "Maison du Forcat."

CHATEAU STE. MARGUERITE, *November 17.*—We are now fairly settled here, and have been very fortunate in getting such a warm comfortable house. Its order of architecture is not the purest in the world, and there is a dash of pale blue and pale pink paint outside, that might be dispensed with; but the views from the windows, and from the white sunny terraces, and from the rock behind the house, are exquisite; we have the two islands, the whole stretch of the Esterels, and a wide rich country towards the right.

Have we not a large household? There is a housekeeper, a man-cook, a valet, a footman, a messenger, and a marketer, besides a man generally useful,—all, however, combined in one! Yes, we have—not a "maid of all work," that would be commonplace—but a "*man of all work*"—a nice civil active Italian, Giuseppe Odoni by name, who bows himself into a Norman arch, puts his hand to his heart, and has a *soupçon* of melancholy about him. We call him Odoni, which has a nice Castle-of-Otranto or Mysteries-of-Udolpho sound about

it. The gardener's daughter, Annette, who is my donkey woman, comes in, however, every morning, though that was my own proposal, as Odoni rather scorns feminine assistance. Domestic service is one of the weak points of Cannes,—the native female servants are stupid, idle, ignorant, and far from cleanly, yet their wages are very high, from twenty to thirty francs a month, besides wine and coffee; most of them are bad cooks, none of them can wait at table, and they do not market well; the consequence is, that most people complain of the badness of food here; it is dear, but when well chosen and kept a proper time, it is excellent. It is also of great importance to pay ready money; for, rather than let you go to another shop, they will give you the best articles, which, if you run an account even for a week they will not do, knowing that you must take what they give—the demand being greater than the supply. Odoni gives us the most beautiful little dinners, everything so tender and good; and though his wages are large, sixty francs a month, and fifteen for wine, I believe it is a saving in the end. We get excellent butter from a farm-house near this, and I never saw such magnificent cream, either in England or Scotland—yet people will tell you that there is not a drop of cream to be had, just because they will not take the trouble of finding it out. There is also a milk and butter woman at Le Cannet, a village on the other side of Cannes, who brings it in every morning equally good. I must make you guess, *par parenthèse*, what the cows are frequently fed upon here. Grass? common-

place. Turnips? prosaic. Cabbages? vulgar—they are fed upon oranges! There are two restaurateurs at Cannes, Larrat and Christine; the latter is by far the best—and he is so liberal in his supply, that one cannot imagine what profit he makes; for five francs you can have fish and soup, two dishes of meat, two vegetables and a pudding, and there is enough for four people. Christine was once cook in an English family, and if he is told that simple dinners are preferred, he sends you plain dishes, roasted and boiled.

After all this matter-of-fact prose, I must refresh myself by telling you of the perpetual charm which the common plants afford one in this fragrant land; to walk along the high road is like passing through a greenhouse at home. Myrtles, green and sweet-scented, are weeds,—“instead of the brier comes up the myrtle-tree,”—and you may chance to find that the *sarments*, or small fagots for lighting your fire, are made of myrtle twigs. The lovely arbutus, with its scarlet berries, ripe and pleasant to the taste, clothes the sides of the mountains; the lemon-scented geranium is cultivated in fields—at a little distance short-sighted people might take it for ill-conditioned turnips. Then you meet with fields of something else, that puzzle you very much indeed, scraggy-looking bushes, with a delicate feathery leaf, and little golden balls, redolent of the sweetest perfume—it is the cassia mentioned in Scripture, among the principal spices used for the sacred ointment, “compound after the art of the apothecary.”*

* Exodus xxx. 24.

And again: "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces whereby they have made thee glad."* There are also fields of jessamine, not tall and bushy like ours, but short plants with exquisite long flowers; and in their seasons there are fields of roses and tuberoses, and lavender, and jonquil, and rosemary. But why in fields? you ask. Because there are not only manufactures of perfume at Cannes itself, but a great part of its commerce consists in the supply of flowers for the extensive perfumeries of Grasse, a town about ten miles distant.

I have been very much interested by the statistics of the perfume harvests here, so I shall give you the benefit of them. The average annual quantity of orange-flower produced at Cannes, is 150,000 kilogrammes,† and the price at which they are sold is from ten sous to one franc per kilogramme, according to the season; but at 150,000 kilos the average price would be fifteen sous. The cassia harvest yields about 20,000 kilogrammes, and the price varies from two to six francs per kilo. About 15,000 kilos of jasmine flowers are produced at Cannes, at from two to three francs the kilo. About 50,000 kilos of rose leaves at from ten sous to one franc the kilo. About 30,000 kilos of violets at two to three francs the kilo. Of geraniums the leaves only are distilled for essences and pomades. The average produce is 10,000 kilos, at from two to five sous the kilo. It has been found that the produce

* Psalm xlv. 8.

† A kilogramme or kilo is equal to 2 lbs. 3 oz. 4½ drs. avoird.

of orange-flowers, cassias, jasmine, and violets, increases about one-sixth every year. Roses and geraniums are stationary. The annual amount received at Cannes for flowers from the distilleries is from 250,000 to 300,000 francs. The produce of these when distilled amounts to *triple* the sum. Scarcely any bitter oranges are allowed to ripen at Cannes. The bitter orange trees are kept solely for the flower, of which the harvest begins early in April, and lasts till the 8th or 10th of June. In winter, the flower is gathered to prevent its turning to fruit, and is sold at one-third of the price of the summer flower. The orange flower harvest is gathered by women at wages of one franc a day, who work 12 hours, *i.e.*, 14 hours a day, with two rests of an hour each. Each woman will pick about 15 kilos when the harvest is most full—but on the average about 10, so that it is generally calculated that the picking costs 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ sous the kilo. In a good orange garden, where the trees are well grown and carefully managed, and well manured, each tree ought to produce from four to five francs a year. A square acre contains nearly 300 trees—planted at four yards apart each way; so that the annual produce of a well-managed orange garden, when all the trees are in full bearing, is 1500 francs or £60. Generally, however, an acre may be taken as containing 200 trees, and the produce at £40 per acre. The expense of management consists in trenching the ground twice a year and manuring it once; one franc a tree will cover this, so that the average net produce of an acre of good orange ground is about £32 a year.

This is certainly rather over than under the mark. After the flowers are picked, the trees are carefully pruned by men trained to this work, as it is an operation of much delicacy. The prunings, called "brout," are sold at about one franc the 100 kilogrammes, and this pays for the expense of pruning, and for once trenching the ground.*

Well, what do you think of all this matter-of-fact information concerning orange-growing, and violets and jasmine, which one used to think of as coming within the poet's domain rather than the merchant's? It does not take away a ray from their beauty, however, but only adds to it more of that beauty of utility which is the law of all things, from the great world-stars to the smallest stone, or plant, or insect.

Would it interest you to have a list of some of the exotic and natural productions of the Var, which is the department in which Cannes is situated? Among the former class you have the orange, the lemon, the olive, the quince, the plum, the pear, the apple, the apricot, the peach, the fig, the pistachio, the almond, the cherry, the vine, the cypress, the cherry laurel, the bay-tree, the horse-chestnut, the plane, the walnut, the acacia, the mulberry, the palm, the lilac, the fig, the delicious green and purple fruit of which is sold in the common market along with that of the pomegranate, which is more curious than savoury. The latter is about the size of an apple, with a

* Mr. William Brougham, who has attended very much to this cultivation, has had the kindness to furnish the above information.

knob on the top ; when you cut the fruit open you find a great many compartments filled with curious seeds, which contain an acid juice, rather pleasant than otherwise ; it is interesting as being so frequently mentioned in Scripture ; beneath the shade of its bushy hawthorn-like tree, Saul of Israel rested* in his days of victory.† The spies of Canaan took specimens of the pomegranates‡ of Eshcol, as well as its giant grapes ; while the work of Christ's Church upon earth is thus typified : — “ Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grapes appear, and the pomegranates bud forth.”§ There is the aloe, too, with its broad fleshy African-looking leaves, and tall pyramidal flowering stems, shooting up column-like, twenty feet in height, which seed and die down to the ground ; it flowers every twenty-five or thirty years, and grows wild without care or cultivation. It is the *aloë spicata* which we have here—the same species, I believe, which at the cape of Good Hope supplies the London pharmacopœia ; the brown juice may be seen resting on the leaf like a bead, but they say it is not very bitter or nauseous. In some species the leaves are used for scouring kitchen utensils and floors, and when cut into slices are used for feeding the cattle. The juice is made into cakes, which are used for washing, and make lather with salt water as well as with fresh. The fibres of the leaves may be separated into threads, which is done by bruising them, steeping them in water, and

* 1 Sam. xiv. 2.

‡ Numb. xiii. 23.

† Deut. viii. 8.

‡ Cant. vii. 12.

then beating them. These fibres are employed for all the purposes to which thread can be applied, but they are neither strong nor durable when exposed to moisture.

This species of aloe cannot, however, be the sweet aloe classed in the Bible with myrrh and frankincense and cassia, which must have been the *aquilaria agallochum* or lign-aloe, considered a sacred tree by the Indians, and called by the Dutch the Paradise Tree, being supposed to be one of the trees indigenous in the garden of Eden, and it is used in Holy Writ as an emblem of beauty and prosperity : “ How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob ! and thy tabernacles, O Israel ! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river’s side, as the trees of lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar-trees beside the waters.”* There is also the caper-tree, the unopened buds of the flower of which are, you know, the prized part of it. It is extensively cultivated in the district, and in an interesting book which I have been reading upon the plants of Scripture, I find that the caper is once named in the Bible in a passage where I should never have thought of looking for it—“ When the grasshopper shall be a burden, and *desire* shall fail.”† The word translated “ desire ” is, according to the Septuagint, *Abiyonah*, or the caper plant, and in the Vulgate, *abiyonah* is represented by “ *capparis* ” the modern botanical name. It is commonly used in the East to give zest to the failing appetite, and hence the utter

* Numbers xxiv. 5, 6.

† Ecc. xii. 5.—*Flowers from the Holy Land*, by Robert Tyes, B.A.

failure of even this stimulus to the palate adds another striking feature to the vivid description of old age and infirmity.

Some of the indigenous productions are the cork, the larch, the vine, the beech, the birch, the elm, the yoke-elm, the ash, the poplar, the willow, the tamarind, the maple, the elder, the chestnut, the sumach, the juniper, the cedra, the broom, the terebinth, the mastic tree, the spurge laurel, and that magnificent oriental-looking Indian fig, with its thick gigantic prickly leaves, which form both stem and foliage, and its yellow spotted fruit, which is insipid to the taste—something like a turnip. The prickles are very dangerous, as they are exceedingly brittle, and break into the skin ; it is a plant of very easy growth, and is propagated by the leaves, which are stuck into the earth, and soon take root.*

* The following description of the Provençal flowers is so characteristic that I venture to extract it from a birthday poem addressed to Mrs. Woolfield, by Mr. Frederick Neil :—

“ When sadly a loved one leaves all that he loves,
And amid the cold world a poor exile he roves ;
To rekindle the embers of life ere they die,
’Neath a more brilliant sun and a lovelier sky.
Oh, think not the beauty of nature alone
For all the heart suffers can ever atone ;
Think not that this land of the fair Provence rose,
Where the tall shooting aloe luxuriantly blows ;
Where sweet violets ever their petals unfold,
And the orange-tree dazzles with emerald and gold ;
Where the reign of fierce winter is counted by hours,
And for snow, the bright almond puts forth its flowers ;
Where the cassia, and jasmine, and tuberose bloom,
And the breath of the morn is the sweetest perfume.

As this letter resembles plum-pudding stone at any rate, I shall now give you a description of our drawing-room,—it is an octagon room, with a bronzed column between each of the compartments, which are beautifully painted in fresco, with views of the Maritime Alps and Mediterranean. The roof is formed by a rather unarchitectural continuation of the pillars into a sort of dome, with bright blue sky and long wreaths of flowers ; it is really very pretty, especially in the bright cheery mornings, and everybody admires the way in which the rocks, buildings, and trees, stand out from the wall with quite a stereoscopic effect ; but at night it is difficult to light, and is rather gloomy. This is a very dark evening, but one can see from the windows the outline of the dark hills, and the pine tops, and the olives, and the sea, which is sounding a melancholy dirge to-night. Somehow the voices of the Mediterranean seem to me more articulate than any other sea voices I ever heard. Every moment that solemn roll and dash of the waves on the sand and the porphyry rocks, is becoming grander, and seems to portend a mistral storm to-morrow. One is apt to feel rather “eerie”

Where e'en now, in the shade of the pines waving high,
All pillow'd by myrtle, the exile may lie,
Where no landscape of bare frozen trees decks the soil ;
Where o'er the far mountain deep purple is strewn,
Soft and clear as light seen through a pure precious stone ;
Where only for beauty clouds seem to arise,
And the sea is all glorious with deep azure dyes ;
Though, like moments of rage in the tranquillest breast,
It has fierce sudden storms, then sinks calmly to rest.”

out here, for the Château Ste. Marguerite is the last house in this direction, except the Château de la Bocca, belonging to Mr. Sym, an English clergyman, who only inhabits it occasionally. We are very near the Esterels, which in old time were celebrated for their brigands and their *drames sanglants*, and even now travellers are recommended not to cross them after dark. We have, however, excellent protection close at hand. A few paces from the house there is a station of the coast-guard, one of whom patrols night and day in front of the windows. At first I was rather like the little child, that was crying from fear one night, and was told by its nurse not to be afraid, for its guardian angel was quite near. "Oh, but," it sobbed out, "it's my guardian angel that I'm so frightened for!" I have, however, grown accustomed to my guardian angels now, who seem rather nice sort of people, and live in picturesque little huts on the rocks close to our gate.

LETTER VI.

CHATEAU STE. MARGUERITE, November 24.—Since I wrote last I have been to a Roman Catholic marriage and a Quaker's meeting. The bride, a young Cannes lady, was married first at the Hôtel de Ville by the *préfet*—then she walked all through the dusty streets, and up the steep Mont Chevalier, in her beautiful laces and silks, without bonnet or shawl, followed by the wedding *cortège*, to the parish church, where she was married again by the priest, and afterwards there was the mass. She was a fresh, sweet-looking creature, and one of her young attendants was *very* pretty. There was, till lately, a curious custom at Cannes ; marriages, both the civil and the religious, always took place at night,—the former I believe at midnight, the latter at two o'clock in the morning, while, by a curious contradiction, death was honoured by a strange and revolting publicity—corpses being carried to burial with uncovered faces in the light of day ; this custom was, however, stopped a good many years ago.

I never saw a lovelier view, or succession of views, than that from the Mont Chevalier. I must try to make you see them too. Looking towards the west there are the Esterels, ever and always beautiful. They are 4230 feet above the level of the sea, from which they rise abruptly. Between them and us there is the lovely bay of Napoule, with its sweep of yellow beachy sand ; above them is a range of greenish rocky hills, sprinkled with châteaux ; the farthest of which boasts a square tower, and a statue of Ste. Marguerite, a respectable ancient saint, who looks very young and pretty in white plaster-of-Paris. Well, that is our house. Then comes the turrets of the Château La Bocca, and a lovely Italian villa, called Château St. George, more of which anon ; then the Château Court, inhabited at present by the Duchess of Gordon, and the Château Girard, taken by the Duchess of Manchester, and Lord Brougham's château, and Mr. Evan's pretty villa ; then a grand castellated mansion, a "petit Windsor," as a Frenchman called it, which has just been bought from its proprietor, Mr. Woolfield, by Lord Londesborough. There are also plenty of others of all sizes, shapes, and orders of architecture, gleaming out very pictorially from amongst the olive-trees. Between the villas and the sea, there is a very pretty little English church, built by Mr. Woolfield, in admirable taste without and within. Now, turn to the south, and you look down on that blue sparkling many-shaded sea, in which you find the islands of Ste. Marguerite and St. Honorat, which, with

two or three very small ones, form the group of the Lérins,—in one of which there is a massive fort; in the other an ancient castle. In the far distance it is said that if you have good eyes, and a better imagination, you may see something very faint, which might be the island of Corsica, and the very supposition brings a rush of thoughts about a little child at his mother's knee, in that island long ago,—a conqueror of continents,—an emperor crowned, sceptred, and ermined,—a lonely exile in Elba,—a dreamless sleeper beneath the willows of St. Helena. But supposing that you are not gifted with eyes and imagination, you may turn to the north, and there, embosomed among the hills, you see a picturesque little village, called Le Cannet, and so called along with Cannes and Cagne, another small town in the district, from the gigantic canes which abound in all this region. Then turn to the east, and there again you have the hills which surround Cannes like an amphitheatre. There too, you have a continuation of the villas. One very large one, the Château de Marais, belongs to the German homœopathic doctor, Dr. Severinn; another to M. Desanges, the father of the eminent London artist of that name; another to Admiral Pakenham, who was banished from Tuscany on account of his efforts to spread the Bible; another, with a slender Muscovian tower, belongs to M. Trippet, a French gentleman, married to a Russian lady; another, very large and handsome, which is taken this season by M. Fould, brother of M. Achille Fould;



and now, I think that is nearly all that can be seen from our elevation, except that just at our feet lies the odd little town of Cannes, not the cleanliest of places, but looking all the more picturesque, with one or two towers, and its pretty Cours or Boulevard, amongst the old trees of which the pretty bride looked like "a snowy dove," as she went along in her wedding finery.

I must tell you something about the Quakers' meeting. The lady who preached was Mrs. Gurney, the widow of Joseph John Gurney, and sister-in-law of Elizabeth Fry, a fine-looking woman, with a beautiful smile and fresh bloom,—the discourse and the prayer were intoned in an unmusical species of chant, while sentence by sentence was translated into French by a French Quakeress, who was a prompt and admirable interpreter. Not all the love and interest that the life of Elizabeth Fry inspires one with from the youthful days of "the scarlet riding-habit" to the soberer ones of Earlham and Plashett, could reconcile me to the transgression of what seems so plain a command against women speaking in public; but I hear that the French who crowded into the room were exceedingly impressed by the service, so good may have been done.

Wednesday, 26th.—Yesterday we had a charming excursion. My father and I and the L.'s, went to Grasse, a town about ten miles from this; the head-quarters of perfumery in

this part of the world, and from whence there are vast quantities of essences, pomades, and soap sent to all countries. The first thing that struck me on our journey—more perhaps than the object warranted, was a solitary palm-tree, which grows near this town on the Grasse road—there are several others in gardens, but not so erect, stately, and isolated. It looked wild and eastern out there under the sun, and brought all sorts of thoughts and memories,—some of oriental tales, others of old pictures of saints and martyrdoms, and yet others of solemn passages in Holy Writ, concerning days to come, when golden harps and branches of palms are to be tokens of joy and victory.

The scenery about Grasse is splendid—it is very high up in the centre of hills, which are terraced all round with white flat-roofed eastern-looking houses, and the slopes covered with my friends, grown so familiar now, the olives and the oranges. Down on one side far away, you see the Mediterranean, and up on the other one *ought* to see the Alps; but sometimes even the Alps don't behave better than their neighbours, and so they had not the civility to emerge from their grand misty homes, which are like so many “great white thrones.” In the chapel of the hospital there are three pictures said to be by Rubens; they struck me as having all the bad features of his style without any of the good; the subjects are—“Ste. Hélène à l'exaltation de la Sainte Croix,” “Le Couronnement d'épines,” and “Le Crucifiement de notre Seigneur.” The Emperor Alexander offered 100,000 francs to their possessor,

M. Perrelles, who refused to sell them, but presented the pictures to Grasse.

The town is full of fountains, some old and some new, which are the objects of great pride and veneration to the inhabitants, especially the new ones. Indeed they were much mortified at our refusing to sketch a juvenile marble fountain, and patronizing instead a good old one, with two venerable dolphins carved on it.

The town contains eighty perfumeries, or distilleries of perfumes, only five of which make perfumes in retail, all the rest export or sell in wholesale, through other merchants. It is celebrated besides, for the beauty of its confections, and there are large cork manufactories. We went through M. Court's perfumery, and saw the whole process; but perfumes in the act of being manufactured, and in the different stages, are not so poetical as they sound, and in fact, we had rather too much of a good thing, and sagely remarked when we were half stifled by odours of orange-flower, jessamine, and cassia, that "enough was as good as a feast." Grasse is the quaintest drollest old place that you can imagine. Such narrow streets and old arches and towers. One very old house in a round tower, I resolved to penetrate, and B. and I rushed in,—she went one way and I another, and fairly lost each other, but everybody was very kind to us, and pointed out the views from the windows, and seemed to think us harmless lunatics, who ought to be indulged. I found my way into a nice clean little room, where a young girl was

busily employed in lace making, with reels. A glorious picture of the mountains framed between old houses from her window. I wonder if it *elevated* her, or if the "everlasting hills" were to her only lumps of earth covered with oil and perfume.

"A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

Once we thought that we were in for an adventure, for which we were of course thirsting. You must know that for various reasons which I need not detail, we travelled *en prince*, with four horses, and a very smart postilion, with a good deal of scarlet about him, and so many pretty little jingling bells, that we were forcibly reminded of the old nursery rhyme—

"With bells on our fingers and bells on our toes,
We shall have music wherever we goes."

As we were driving out of Grasse in the dark, we were stopped by four or five stout men, who spoke in very stern accents to the scarlet gentleman. "Stand and deliver!" we never doubted was the proper English translation; an instant after, they came to the window, but there, alas! the tragedy ended, for they were distressingly civil and smooth spoken, as they inquired if the four horses were our own property? evidently as we hoped taking us for great personages in disguise,—assured themselves as to the colour of the carriage, number of people, etc., etc., and then "made a

note of it," as like Captain Cuttle as possible, concluding by the lowest of bows, and politest of assurances that it was only a *formalité*—and off we went.

We dined at one of the hotels, and had a very good dinner, a fire under the table to keep our feet warm, which we thought peculiar, and perhaps a little dangerous, and tallow candles under the dishes to keep them hot too, which, when no longer needed were blown out, and dispersed an odour *not* of Araby the blest—but this refinement we owed to the four horses, which did not arrive at Grasse every day.

Some years ago, there was a peculiar conflagration in the market-place of Grasse ; several monks went about preaching constantly, and got up a kind of revival among the people, who flocked to them in crowds. As a pledge of their sincerity, the monks told them that they must bring all their bad books and burn them. They accordingly brought the works of Guizot, Thiers, and Prosper Mérimée, which were forthwith burned ignobly !

Marble of various colours is found in great quantities near Grasse, also jasper and a beautiful alabaster, and statuary marble. No wonder that one finds marble chimney-pieces and marble tables everywhere ; even in the poorest rooms of the poorest lodging-houses you have marble, mirrors, clocks, and *fauteuils*—the four universal articles of luxury. The ruins at Grasse are very pretty ; there are two of the square towers which are so common in these regions, and which are generally called Saracenic, but antiquaries shrug

their shoulders and scornfully mutter, "On dit beaucoup de choses." There is a Roman aqueduct above the town, which, however, we did not see, and near that there were once the ruins of a tower which went among the people by the name of the "Tour de Marius," but there are now no vestiges of it. Underneath the parish church there is a subterranean church, but neither is very old. Vauban gave the plan of the latter, at the request of the Bishop of Grasse, who was his relative.

LETTER VII.

CHATEAU STE. MARGUERITE, *December 13.*—I have not given you an account of two excursions which we have had: one was to Antibes, which is about six miles from Cannes,—it is a very uninteresting town in itself, but the fortifications are very fine, and the situation of the town charming. From the rampart we had our first thrill and our first sight of *Italy*—the snowy Italian Alps stretching far out, and Nice sleeping in the sun at their feet. The Fort Carré of Antibes is said to be by Vauban, but I believe that it is only the external fortifications which are after one of his plans,—the fort itself is much more ancient. Our other excursion was to Napoule, a “deserted village,” not far from this, where we went one lovely summer’s-day-in-December last week. There are not more than twenty houses, each looking more uninhabited and desolate than the other, and we only saw one human being besides the everlasting coast-guard, to be found everywhere here, although they say there is little or

no smuggling. They are not unpicturesque with their blue great-coats and carabines. Close to the village are the ruins of a large château, picturesquely situated on a rocky piece of ground, overhanging the sea. It was one of the many houses desolated at the time of the first Revolution. Not all the old castles that I have seen in England and Scotland—not Bolsover Castle, mentioned in Domesday-book,—not dear old Loch Leven, with its Mary Stuart and its Walter Scott,—not Stirling, Edinburgh, St. Andrews, or any other of our ancient fortresses, whether in ruins or not—have half so much effect upon the mind as these ruins, so frequent in France, of comparatively modern date ; one has no associations with them,—no poetry—no romance—no old names thrilling one with historical interest. You know absolutely nothing about them. There they are, a heap of ruins—many of the walls blackened by fire ; a name you never heard is jabbered out to you as the name of the ancient seigneur. You hear the terrible words, “*La première Révolution*,” and that is all ; but what a crowd of thought-pictures come into one’s mind ! The horrible French mob thronging this deserted court,—the flames bursting through those windows,—the unfortunate aristocrats slaughtered on those hearths and doorsteps,—the utter desecration of cherished homes and memories. There is something in the very *modernity* which cannot fail to impress. Look out of this large window of the *grand salon*. It is scarcely more than “sixty years since” many a fine lady and French cavalier

have gazed out on that lovely Mediterranean view. Look at these suites of apartments ; it is but as yesterday in comparison with our ancient desolations, since they were bright with light, and wit, and beauty.

There had been rain, and there was the odour of heather and pine which is so sweet and fresh after a shower. It was difficult to believe that we were in France. The form and colour of the hills, the vegetation—for there were no olives, and the cork-trees were easily glorified into Scotch birches by short-sighted eyes like mine,—the sky greyer and softer than usual,—the distant mountains and the old cart road were, for all the world, like bonnie Scotland. Close to us was one little ruined chapel,—on the top of a high green hill was another ; but when we got to the French château, and the Coast Guard, and the deserted village, we were back in France again. At Napoule, the Mediterranean runs in the loveliest little bays among the Esterels ; on the opposite side are the snowy Alps, and towards the east, Cannes, and its islands. The climate was French, not Scotch ; we sat out sketching till sunset, and we drove home by a marvellous moonlight.

The other day I had a *tilt* with Annette, the gardener's daughter, who in her red petticoat, and pretty white plate-shaped Nice hat, walks beside my donkey. Annette, by the way, is prettier, cleverer, and gentler than the generality of the women hereabouts, which is not saying much, however. She is very strong in her Mariolatry, and when she

heard that I did not worship the Virgin Mary, and did not believe that she could work miracles, there were no bounds to her indignation,—but “Ecoutez, Mademoiselle,” upon which she poured into my ears a variety of undoubted facts—a dumb man “qui parle très-bien aujourd’hui,” a sick woman perfectly cured, and so on with a long list of miracles performed by the Virgin. When I still shook my head, Annette’s indignation subsided into contemptuous pity, and if there could have been a free translation into Scotch of that inimitable shrug and turning up of the eyes, and wave of the hands, it would have run thus—“Poor body, she’s no a’ there.” It is a painful and difficult thing to say a word to the peasants here of all that is in one’s heart about them, especially with all the disadvantages of language, for they know not much more French than I do. *Assertion* is their only weapon—a counter assertion does no good,—they are not intelligent enough to be *reasoned* with, and they cannot read the Book of Books, even if they were allowed to have it. The next morning Annette came into my room, and with mysterious looks she dived into a very deep pocket, and drew out a large, old, but once upon a time very handsome library book,—then she dived again, and brought out another, precisely similar. I knew that she could not read, so I immediately conjectured that she had confessed her interview with me to the priest, who had sent these books to convert me. I was so possessed by this idea that you can scarcely imagine what a funny revulsion of feeling there was when I opened the

books, and found *Sir Charles Grandison*! “De mon père, pour Mademoiselle pour s’amuser!” Somebody had given them to the gardener long ago, and as he could not read himself, he thought it was a pity that I should not benefit by the wasted treasure.

I took a quiet solitary walk on the sands to-day, and sat down on the beach watching that lovely sea and sky. There is a verse in the Bible* which says, “God has made everything beautiful in his time ;” and the conclusion to the verse is sometimes thus translated :—“And has put a mystery into the heart of the created things.” One feels that ; there is a mysterious something in beauty that cannot be expressed or understood,—something that produces

“ That feeling of sadness and longing
Which is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles rain.”

The sea here is certainly at times bluer than the bluest of other seas, but it is not its loveliest phase ; on the contrary, the greatest charm of the Mediterranean seems to me to be its exquisite variety ; there is the lilac, the stony grey, the *bleu foncé*, the pale blue flushed with rose, the milkiness, as if it were a milky way, the sheet of silver,—and that I think is the most beautiful, for the sky is then silvered blue also, and yet the sun so bright and clear that you can scarcely believe the colour is not the usual sky blue that one associates with a

* Eccles. iii. 11.

sunny day at home. My bouquet yesterday was composed of sweet violets, jasmine, and the "rose du mois de Mai," brought wild from the woods,—to-day it has been delicious orange flowers, but it is rare, even here, to have such abundant blossoms at Christmas. Cannes and its loveliness does not "waste its sweetness in the desert air," for it is thus immortalized by Émile Negrin, in a volume of poems entitled *Le Beau Ciel de Cannes*.

"Cannes, c'est mieux que la Provence et mieux que l'Italie." (J. J. Baude, les Côtes de Provence.)

Salut, beau ciel de ma patrie,
 Salut, ineffable harmonie ;
 De la brise au milieu des pins,
 Salut, parfums de la colline,
 Algues vertes, rochers que mine
 L'écume des gouffres marins ;

Oh Cannes, sur ton sol fertile
 Où l'étranger cherche un asile ;
 Contre les frimas de l'hiver,
 Trois choses, comme un trait de flamme
 De poésie emplissent l'âme—
 Le soleil, le mistral, la mer!

Quel climat et quelle richesse,
 Naples n'a pas tant de mollesse ;
 Nice n'a pas tant de douceur,
 L'Orient pas tant de lumière ;
 Les Savanes tant de mystère,
 Les oasis tant de fraîcheur.

L'aloës, le palmier s'allient,
 Aux sapins dont les branches plient ;
 Le citron donne ses saveurs,
 Et pour toi sur les eaux tranquilles,
 Une fée a laissé deux îles,
 Comme deux corbeilles de fleurs,

Ici, les paysannes heureuses,
 Fourent plus de fleurs précieuses,
 Qu'ailleurs les reines, de gazons ;
 L'oranger, l'olivier immense ;
 Ombragent ici mieux leur danse
 Que les grands chênes des vallons. . . .

Dans la route de l'existence,
 Oh mon pays, la Providence
 Je ménage tous ses bienfaits ;
 Pour cacher leurs têtes souffrantes
 Les autres peuples ont des tentes
 Et nous, nous avons un palais !*

But as you are anti-poetic, I must quote for you a prose sentence, descriptive of Cannes, which I find in Lord Brougham's Dialogues upon Republican and Monarchical Government :—"At this inauspicious period (1848), far removed from scenes of strife, we were calmly enjoying the delightful climate of Provence, its clear sky and refreshing breezes, while the deep blue waters of the Mediterranean lay stretched before us ; the orange groves and cassia plantations perfumed the air around us, and the forests behind, crowned with pines and evergreen oaks, and ending in the Alps, protected us by their eternal granite, from the cold winds of the north, but tempered the heat which, for want of the sea-breeze, often becomes oppressive at this season of the year."†

December 16.—We have had a very merry excursion to Le Cannet. Miss A. T. was mounted on a tall horse—I on a little

* Poésies par Emile Negrin—*Le Beau Ciel de Cannes*.

† Lord Brougham's *Statesmen of the Time of George III.*, vol. iii. p. 376.

donkey, and C. and B. walked beside us. It is a little village among the hills, about two miles from Cannes, which rejoices in the definite article, a distinction of which its inhabitants are very tenacious ; it would be considered a breach of propriety if you did not say *au* Cannet, *du* Cannet, and so on. It is an offshoot from Cannes, and has about 2000 inhabitants. Till about eighty years ago, Cannes was the commune of Le Cannet—but there was a division, and now the latter has its parish church and separate jurisdiction ; marriages can now be performed there and births registered. Its name is literally the Little Cannes, and I believe that there are several villages of the same name in France. It is a very pretty picturesque old place—quite inaccessible to a carriage—for the streets are almost perpendicular, excessively narrow, and composed of round boulders, amongst which the horses' and donkeys' feet slip about in a peculiar and not very comfortable way. Every step was a picture,—that open door with the hens running about, and the old woman in her black hat and red petticoat, and blue pockets, and pink kerchief, and brown apron folded over her hands,—that aperture in the street, with a peep of the valley beneath, and that other one with the golden orange-grove shining through from above,—that underground stable with the white horse's head peering out upon the road, at a level with our feet,—that old old gable,—that low, wide arch leading into a dark granary,—each would have made a study for an artist. At last we came to a pretty modern *Place*, with a terrace looking down the valley to the

sea, and with innumerable orange-groves between,—and at one side an old house said to be Saracenic, which certainly looked very “auld warld” like, and as if it had been something of note and distinction in its day. The story at Le Cannet is, that in this house a party of Romans were once besieged in their turn by the inhabitants of the surrounding country. They defended themselves desperately, and poured down stones and missiles from the roof, but in the end were obliged to surrender. On the road to Le Cannet there is a pretty little ruin, the Chapelle de St. Claude, with some cypresses towering above it, an old aqueduct, a little bridge, and an olive mill, rude in machinery, dark and dirty, but *so* picturesque. We first saw the whole olives put into a round mill driven by water, where they are crushed by a large mill-wheel, but no oil extracted. They are then taken out and put into another mill in this crushed state, and pressed by great weights till the pure oil runs out into vats. The refuse is put into another mill, and the produce of that is the coarse cheap oil used for kitchen lamps. Standing all about there were magnificent large oil jars, which looked as if Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves had that instant stepped out of them. There is not much trade going on at Le Cannet ; but one article of traffic we found out by aid of our noses, which were suddenly assailed by something very tremendous : we questioned Annette, who told us that it was “cile,” as we thought she said. After our united energies being spent for some time upon this mysterious

word, we discovered that it was "cire." "Pour cacheter les lettres?" Annette looked quite horrified at the supposition. "Non! non! pour faire les petits hommes comme ça," pointing to the length of her elbow. We were not a bit the wiser,—but at last we found out that we had lighted on a manufactory of wax images for the churches.

My donkey showed himself upon this occasion to be a donkey of a truly aspiring disposition, and insisted on keeping in the very centre of the path, ahead of the tall horse. He and I encountered a goat one day—neither would yield precedence, and between them I was nearly a martyr, for we walked over the goat, which didn't feel agreeable.

LETTER VIII.

CHATEAU STE. MARGUERITE, *December 18.*—This is to be a long letter—for I have so much to say that I scarcely know where to begin! I must commence by telling you of one sight which is very common here;—one meets *two* gendarmes,—never *one*, never *three*, always *two*; they have cocked hats, blue coats, silver lace, well-trained horses, off which they may jump a dozen times a day to hunt a culprit through the woods, yet always find them standing on the very same spot. They have, moreover, somewhat of an imperious and insolent air—at least so it seems to me, who have perhaps a very small prejudice against them. Whenever you see these odious cocked hats, you may be sure that beside them is a large cart filled with prisoners chained together, who are on their way to the Prefecture, or Sous-Prefecture, or to the Sardinian authorities at the Var; and if the cart is quite full, beside it generally walk several others, also chained two-and-two; the varied expressions

of desperation, sullenness, apathy, and contempt, are painful to see. They are never chained except for criminal offences ; though the country people, who appear to have more sympathy with them than with the gendarmes, say that they are often chained for nothing worse than having no passports. This is not true, as I have since ascertained, except in cases where they have resisted or attempted to evade the gendarmes. Yesterday I met the gendarmes and the cart,—and I can scarcely tell you the strange repellent feeling that I had at the sight of the occupant of that cart ; there might have been several, but I only noticed one. It was as if I had seen something that was a wild beast, and yet was not—something akin to ourselves, and yet not of ourselves. A strange wild figure crouched down in the cart with a blanket round him, and a flannel hood upon his head ; underneath the hood there was a face that I shall never forget, as it lay sunk upon his knees. Long black dishevelled hair, deep brown skin, black ferocious eyes, with a look of dumb despair in them, as if he suffered, but scorned to say that he suffered ; he was a Bedouin Arab. The fortress in the island of Ste. Marguerite is a state prison solely for the Arabs who are sent here from Toulon, in the course of this vile war of extermination going on in Algeria ; the cart was on its way to the fortress. That was my experience of Arabs yesterday. To-day I have seen sixty-one,—have been in familiar conversation with them—as far as nods and signs and *bon jours* went,—have lost my heart

to two of them,—have their volunteered autographs in my sketch-book,—have had the ribbons of my hat put aside with the most solemn and majestic dignity in order to have a good look of my brooch, which was examined and patted with the same air of stony grandeur ;—not from the curiosity and love of trinkets shown by the inferior Arabs, but because of the *horses* upon it,—it was my cameo of the horses of the sun ; it was very touching, for we know how these sons of the desert love their own beautiful steeds.

We have long been anxious to go to the island, but the mistral threatened, or something came in the way. To-day the bay was exquisitely calm ; my sister and I all at once took a yearning to be on the sea, so off we went,—and the loveliness that we saw ! One can scarcely say that one has seen Cannes—certainly not its exceeding beauty—till it has been seen from the sea. The Esterels blue and misty,—the wooded hills sprinkled with those pretty shining villas,—the Mont Chevalier, and the ruins, and the Cathedral, nothing very fine in point of architecture in themselves, but at a distance looking most picturesque and oriental in their outlines against the clear sky. Behind the dark green line of hills there is that more arid stony range, which takes the most lovely pale lilac in the sunlight ;—then in wonderful startling contrast with the dark green and the pale olive, and the sunlit lilac, there are the snowy Alps. Those Alps, with their needly points, jutting into the clearest blue sky that ever smiled ! Oh ! the depths and

the heights of their purity, and their fearlessness, and their majesty! They seem a pathway into heaven. One has the same feeling of unattainableness—the same hopeless yearning to be like them—the same sensation of envy that one has in looking out upon the glories of a moonlight night. I think I shall never see the moon without thinking of the Alps. There is something of rebuke in the calmness and purity of both. In gazing at the moon and the stars, and all their host, there is a verse of Scripture which always exemplifies startlingly the exceeding holiness of that God in whose presence we may be in a moment—“In his sight the heavens are not clean.” No, nor those spotless snowy mountains! What then must we be, and our hearts so full of the shadows and the spots of worldliness and pride and frivolity—so full of many dark and unsightly places?

We landed and went up to the fortress, which is by Vauban—a massive white building, that always looks beautiful from Cannes during the sun-setting. We first saw a good many of the lower class of Arabs—some carrying water, others cooking, others crouched on the ground playing at a game which looked something like draughts—others *crooning* wild harsh Arabic songs; but there were many of a much higher grade—educated men, reading and writing well, and with dignified mien and features—in fact, some were strikingly handsome. Amongst the number, my particular friend of the autograph and the brooch—one *beau-*

ideal of a prince—tall and majestic, with an expression of the most imperturbable serenity. There was a hakeem or doctor, and also a marabout or priest—the latter was reading the Koran, and only parted with it for a few minutes by the harsh order of the official, and with the most extreme reluctance—as it is against their creed to allow it to be touched by infidel fingers. Two others were at their devotions, first falling on their knees, then on their foreheads, and rising again to repeat the ceremony, with inconceivable rapidity, and many self-complacent glances at us. It made one's heart bleed to see them in their ignorance, and to know how shut up were all the avenues by which they could be led to the true knowledge. In the bed-room where the two were at their prayers, there was a broad white line chalked out round the door, and between this line and the door were left all the shoes of the party assembled; having no other place of devotion, they are obliged thus to constitute it holy ground. They hate the French of course, but are very fond of the English. Mrs. E., who understood a little Arabic, heard them consulting together whether we were French or English. At last they applied for information to the French officer, who told them—to tease them, I suppose—that we were French, and their faces fell very much. However, when we put them to rights on the subject, with perhaps rather too much vehemence and pride of country, we were repaid by the cheery cordial faces of the poor Arabs. I have a

pleasing conviction, that if a revolution breaks out, that French officer will have the greatest pleasure in cutting off our heads and sticking them on pikes! There is a Sheikh who has been confined in the fortress for eight years; he was once liberated, but a very short time afterwards the card of an English gentleman, and one or two suspicious letters, were found on him, and he was brought back to that weary life, which must be so much wearier to those wild free Bedouins of the desert than to any other captives.

All the Arabs were dressed without distinction, in the bur-noose, their invariable dress of blankets. It looks strange and picturesque to our eyes, but it is certainly rather unbecoming as viewed from behind. They have the awkward gait of men accustomed to be constantly on horseback, they are always slip-shod, the blankets are long and scanty, and the hoods bear a marvellous resemblance to Scotch *mutches*, black ribbon and all, so that they really look like gigantic old women, with straight backs. Many of the Arabs confined in the island are prisoners of war, or for political offences; but I must confess that there are a good many malefactors also—the one I saw in the cart, for instance, had murdered a few of his relatives; and several looked as if they had in their day ridden after a traveller now and then, and said in a dignified way, according to their fashion,—“Undress thyself! thy aunt (my wife) is in need of a garment.”

The Bedouin prisoners, however, form but a small part of the interest attached to the fortress of Ste. Marguerite, which is closely connected with one of the strangest and most interesting historical problems which has ever perplexed the world—that of the Man with the Iron Mask—never to be satisfactorily solved till the day when masks and irons can find no place. We went to see the dungeon where that mysterious personage lingered for many a year before he was taken to the Bastile ; it is a lofty apartment, and not nearly so uncomfortable as might reasonably have been expected. There is a fireplace, and a large window, grated, however, with three strong iron grates ; the prisoner was allowed a servant, who inhabited a room in the same part of the fortress—a medical man when necessary, and a priest, for whom an altar was erected, according to some accounts, at the end of the narrow passage from which the cell opens. These, with M. de St. Mars, the governor of the fortress, were all that he was permitted to see and converse with.

Among a host of wild and improbable conjectures, the most popular and generally received belief is, that the victim of the Iron Mask was a twin-brother of Louis XIV., whose birth was concealed in consequence of the superstition of his father, to whom it had been predicted that twin-dauphins would be fatal to France. The youngest was therefore brought up in obscurity. When he was about nineteen years of age, his strong likeness to his brother, and his accidental discovery of his birth, made him an object of

dread and suspicion to the reigning monarch. He was therefore arrested and sent to Pignerol, from thence to Ste. Marguerite and the Bastile, where he died in 1703. Were this account true, he must have had a captivity of forty-six years, for the birth-year of the “Grand Monarque” was 1638, and the unfortunate twin was said to be nineteen years of age when he was first seized. In order to prevent his face from betraying the secret, he was condemned to wear an iron mask, sleeping, eating, living, and dying;—his death, which was very sudden, was registered under the name of Marchialy, and it is said that to prevent any discoveries after death, his face was completely destroyed by vitriol. Every sign of habitation was removed from his cell in the Bastile, and afterwards it was found that the entries in the prison register of his arrival and death, were torn out.* Voltaire supports this view, and throws out many hints of possessing greater knowledge than he chose to reveal to the public, and he insinuates that Richelieu, with whom he was on intimate terms in his youth, was his informant. He also refers to Richelieu’s medical attendant, son-in-law to the physician who attended the prisoner in the Bastile, and to M. de Chamillard, the successor of St. Mars, in confirmation of his statements: M. de Bernaville was the last minister intrusted with the secret, and his son-in-law told

* Lord Brougham is in favour of this theory. To the kindness of Mr. William Brougham, I owe a very interesting *r  sum  * of all the different theories which have engaged the attention of historians on this curious subject. See Appendix A.

Voltaire that he had gone on his knees to the dying man, beseeching for the secret ; but the reply was, that it was a State one, and he could not reveal it. Voltaire was the first historian who wrote on the subject, and he notices it as one of the strange circumstances connected with the story, that previous historical writers were wholly ignorant of the facts.* Among the many fables which cluster around the "Iron Mask," there is one connected with the above supposition which I cannot resist giving you. If one only dared, one would certainly believe it ; but pleasant as it is to fly in the face of history, even I am obliged to say, " Hold, enough !" In the early days of that dreary captivity—those days in which the prisoner (whether from fancy or memory) was thus described—"as of handsome face, middle height, brown skin, clear complexion, and beautiful voice,"—there was a lovely young lady in the fortress of Ste. Marguerite ; she was a daughter of one of the officials, and her name was Julie de Bonpart. The mysterious prisoner fell in love with this bright sunbeam, whom he had seen from his window, and what feminine heart could resist a persecuted, royal, and masked prisoner ! The father gave his consent—they were married at an altar erected in the dungeon, and the devoted wife cheered the gloom of the weary lifetime. Two little infant sons could not, however, be retained near the unfortunate parents, and were sent secretly to Corsica, under their ma-

* Voltaire's *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, p. 448. See Appendix B.

ternal name of Bonpart. From them sprung the Buona-partes, who are therefore Bourbons.*

In the course of a conversation at St. Helena, it was mentioned to Napoleon by a gentleman present, that a person had come to him to tell the above story, and to demonstrate from thence that Napoleon was a lineal descendant of the Iron Mask, and thus the legitimate heir of Louis XIII. The gentleman had laughed at the whole story, which made the narrator very angry ; he maintained that the marriage could easily be verified, by the registers of a parish of Marseilles, which he named. The Emperor said that he had heard the same story ; and that such was the love of the marvellous, that it would have been easy to have substantiated something of the kind for the credulous multitude.†

Another story, much better known than the above, is told of Ste. Marguerite, and is also mentioned by Voltaire ; it is said that the prisoner scratched his name and history upon a silver plate, and flung it out of his window into the sea. A fisherman found it entangling his nets one day, and carried it to the governor of the fortress, who asked him sternly—"Avez-vous lu ce qui est écrit sur cette assiette, et quelqu'un l'a-t-il vue entre vos mains ?" "Je ne sais pas lire," replied the fisherman ; "je viens de la trouver, personne

* I met with this story in a book called "*Les Prisons d'Etat dans le Midi de la France*," where it is given as an anecdote of the time.

† See *Journal of the Private Life and Conversations of the Emperor Napoleon at St. Helena*. By the Count de Las Cases. Vol. ii. part 4, p. 344.

ne l'a vue." And the governor rejoined, "Allez, vous êtes bien heureux de ne savoir pas lire." This appeared to be an instance of the bliss of ignorance, but though no immediate measures of severity were taken, the poor fisherman soon after unaccountably disappeared.

A great deal of this history of the Iron Mask and the Royal Twins everybody has heard,—everybody has believed,—everybody has sympathized with, and it is excessively disagreeable to have one's good old beliefs disturbed, and to be coerced into the conviction that one has wasted a great deal of sympathy—that there never was a mask of iron—that the mysterious person, instead of being a persecuted prince, was only a treacherous mercenary count—that instead of forty-six years of imprisonment, there were only twenty-four, and that there is no historical proof that a plate was thrown out of the dungeon ; in fact, that plate, as I shall tell you afterwards, has as uncomfortably good an explanation as most ghost stories.

The opposing theory I first heard from M. Prosper Mérimée, a very distinguished French author, who is at present residing at Cannes ; he has a government appointment for preserving historical and ecclesiastical buildings in France, and has written a charming volume on the antiquities of the south, so that I am afraid he is good authority.*

* *L'Histoire de l'Homme au Masque de Fer.* Par J. Delort, Paris chez Delaforest, 1825 ;—a book which I have not seen, but the following abridged analysis I owe to the kindness of M. Mérimée, who drew it up for me.

In 1677, the Abbé d'Estrades, ambassador of Louis XIV. at Venice, entered into negotiations with the Duke of Mantua for the fortress of Casal, in Piedmont, which offered great advantages as a military fortress for the invasion of Italy. He employed for the projected treaty, Count Ercolo Matthioli, Secretary of State to the preceding Duke of Mantua, and still in favour with the reigning Duke. Matthioli apparently made every exertion to render the affair successful, which it was necessary to keep concealed from the Spaniards, the Imperialists, and all the Italian princes. He wrote to the king to offer his services, and received from him an affectionate letter, dated the 12th of June 1678. He demanded a million, and, after some difficulty, it was stipulated that the king should only give 100,000 crowns. Upon this understanding Matthioli went to Paris in December 1678, and received from the king a handsome ring and 400 louis, besides the promise of a more considerable recompense. He set out for Mantua, the bearer of a secret treaty, of which he guaranteed the ratification by the Duke of Mantua. Louis XIV. made Catinat set out for Pignerol, where several battalions were concentrated. All this was done with great secrecy. Catinat, who was then brigadier, concealed himself under the name of Richemont, and no one at Pignerol knew him except St. Mars, governor of the fortress. However, Matthioli had revealed the secret to the Austrians and the Spaniards, and had been well paid for it. Catinat, in going to the rendezvous which had been assigned to him for the exchange of ratifica-

tions, narrowly escaped being taken, and only got out of the affair by his boldness and presence of mind. The diplomatic agents of France were soon convinced of the treachery of Matthioli. He was at Turin, and the French minister, without showing the least distrust, told him that Catinat was at Pignerol—that he had a great deal of money at his disposal, and that he would willingly give him some of it in order to insure success to the Casal affair. Matthioli was easily persuaded to meet Catinat at a small inn near Turin. As soon as he arrived there he was arrested, and taken to Pignerol. Catinat questioned him, and threatened him with torture if he did not deliver up the compromising documents which he had in his possession,—*i.e.*, the original of the treaty between the king and the Duke of Mantua, the king's letter, etc., etc. He gave a letter, for the purpose of obtaining those papers from his father, in whose house they were concealed. When Catinat quitted Pignerol, he left Matthioli in the keeping of St. Mars, and they gave him the name of L'Etang. The orders of Louvois, the French minister, were, that the prisoner was to be treated very severely, and only to have things necessary to preserve life. In 1681, St. Mars was appointed to the government of Exiles, also in Piedmont. He went thither with two prisoners, Matthioli and a Jacobin monk, who were both conveyed in closed litters, which only received light from the top. The Jacobin monk died at Exiles, and Matthioli was very ill there. In 1687, St. Mars received the government of Ste. Marguerite, in place of that of Exiles. He

once more took Matthioli with him *in a chair covered with waxcloth*, in such a way that he had a little air, without any one being able to see him on his journey. All this is established in the most positive way by the letters of Catinat,—of the Abbé d'Estrades, and of St. Mars. It is equally certain that Matthioli was imprisoned—always under the name of L'Etang, in the dungeon of Ste. Marguerite—and that *there was no other prisoner of importance* taken to Ste. Marguerite at the same epoch—that is to say, between the appointment of St. Mars as governor of the island fortress, and his departure for the Bastile. St. Mars mentions a Protestant minister, detained in the fortress, who had *a craze for writing on pewter plates*, that he was unjustly imprisoned for the purity of the faith. This was the origin of the fisherman and his plate !

St. Mars was named governor of the Bastile in 1697. He set out again with a prisoner, masked with a black velvet mask, which allowed the teeth and lips to be seen: the prisoner had then white hair. There is no mention of a mask being worn by Matthioli at Ste. Marguerite—but it is stated that he was masked on the preceding journeys, for fear of his recognition at any of the resting-places. St. Mars arrived at the Bastile the 18th of September 1698. Dujonca, his lieutenant there, whose journal is published, did not recognise the prisoner, who was masked, till his death, which happened in 1703, when he was buried under the name of Marchialy. Of course, the great difficulty of this theory is

why such precautions, as were easily explained by the other supposition, should be taken with an obscure Italian. It is matter of history, however, that great precaution *was* taken with Matthioli ; and it must be remembered that his arrest and detention were illegal on the part of Louis xiv., as he was a subject of the Duke of Mantua, and not of the French king. The treaty was never ratified by the Duke of Mantua, so that if Matthioli were kept out of the way, it appeared as if the intrigue had been invented by Matthioli to procure money for himself, and Louis's treacherous and dishonourable designs were effectually concealed. One only wonders how, in those unscrupulous days, a quicker and less troublesome way had not been found to stop Matthioli's mouth.

LETTER IX.

CHATEAU STE. MARGUERITE, *December 19.*—I did not tell you yesterday the legend of the Iles de Lérins, as it was told to me—at least of the two principal ones, Ste. Marguerite and St. Honorat—the others are very small and unimportant. They once formed one island, which was inhabited by Ste. Marguerite, not the canonized Queen of Scotland, but a “virgin and martyr.” Her concluding history I do not know, but close to the gate of our present residence there is a little wayside chapel dedicated to her, wherein she is represented as trampling upon the serpents with which the Lérins were infested in old days. St. Honorat and Ste. Marguerite were brother and sister, and lived in separate monastic houses, but the latter paid a visit to her brother once a month, to obtain his ghostly advice and consolation. St. Honorat thought that this was a waste of time, and a considerable disturbance to his devotions, so he prayed to the saints to divide the island into twain. One fine morning Ste.

Marguerite looked out of her window, and lo and behold ! the wild sea waves rolled between her and her brother. To make matters worse, he sent messengers to say, that *he* would visit *her* from that time, but only when the cherry-trees blossomed. Ste. Marguerite had a good deal of feminine wit, so she prayed to the saints in her turn, that the cherry-trees might blossom once a month ; they did so, and poor St. Honorat was obliged reluctantly to confess, that his sister was wiser and better than he. Every month he had not only to pay her a visit, but to cross the sea into the bargain.

Yesterday there was a fair at Cannes, which we passed through on our way home. It was held under the trees of the Cours—indeed partly upon them ; for the branches were gay with scarfs, rugs, bright scarlet and blue umbrellas, and a variety of articles useful and ornamental. Some of the costumes were very pretty, but they were principally those of strangers. One woman had on a bright coloured petticoat, a black velvet jacket with blue lacings across a scarlet boddice, and a profusion of snowy worked muslin, while on her jet-black hair there was a crimson handkerchief. That was the Briga dress, from the Col di Tenda, in Piémont. Another woman had on a *tartan* jacket, which looked very pretty. There was a man walking about, whose long black robe, which looked as if it were thickly spangled with silver, appeared to me like that of a priest, only he had a long pointed cap, rather like a fool's cap. On

closer inspection what do you think he turned out to be ? A walking stall of buttons, needles, and pins, which were fastened in every direction to his black robe and cap ;—of course he was a very popular character. The orderliness and absence of noise or intoxication, even at a late hour, was very remarkable. The poor women in their holiday attire, looked quite unlike the drudges of their everyday life. In that respect, they are quite Oriental here. The women do all the hard work, toiling constantly in the fields, and carrying the heaviest burdens on their heads, knitting all the time. They always look double their real age, and have not the graceful carriage said to be produced by weights on the head. There is a great deal of "*liberté, égalité, et fraternité*" in the manners of the peasantry, more especially of the women, rather appertaining to republican than imperialist days. The housemaid of a friend of mine flew at me the other day, shaking hands vehemently ; and another lady was so fatigued by the constant shakings of hands expected by her cook and other domestics, that she was obliged to put a stop to it.

On Christmas-day I had hoped to see a good deal that was characteristic here, but it was our only rainy day ! We have had two or three rainy mornings, but they always cleared up into glorious days ; on that day, however, it rained relentlessly. Christmas, and the three succeeding days, are all fête days, consisting of a great many masses in the church, a great many suppers at home, a great deal of bowl-

playing, even in the high-road, and a babyish game with almond-nuts, which is the principal Christmas amusement here for the young women. Annette clasps her hands in ecstasy at the very idea of this game, and has had her pocket full of nuts these four days, which she has won upon the sands. The sea-shore is the place for all these gay doings ; and you see troops of girls and women amusing themselves together, while the young men and their bowls are as far apart as if they acknowledged the Quaker principle. The girls have their two hands clasped, containing as many almond-nuts as they can hold, without being seen, and the great fun consists in guessing how many there are. If they guess right they get all the almonds, if they guess wrong they forfeit all their own ; then they roll them along the ground, toss them in the air, and do all sorts of charming things with them, as Annette says with enthusiasm. There is nothing pretty to be seen in the way of costume. At these grand fêtes all the pretty white flat hats, and the three-cornered handkerchiefs, and the large straw hats are put away, and everybody wears the smartest, newest, whitest caps trimmed with a great deal of ribbon, which makes the young girls look old, and the elderly ones still older.

December 28.—As I have given you so many rose-coloured descriptions of the Cannean climate, it is only fair that I give you one occasionally in darker hues. I am looking out of the window very disconsolately. It is a mistral,—

Quel est ce bruit ? Sur ces vitrages
Quels sont ces sifflements sauvages ?
Quels sont ces discordants concerts ?
Dans les champs, dans la ville entière
Un rideau mouvant de poussière
Parfois obscurcit la lumière
L'âme est triste, les quais déserts.

Savez-vous pourquoi les murs tremblent ?
Pourquoi les grands oliviers semblent
Comme au triomphe d'un rival
Courber leur gigantesque tête ?
Pourquoi la voix de la tempête
D'échos en échos se répète ?
Pourquoi celà ? . . . c'est le mistral !*

The mistral you know is a north-west wind, of a most keen and biting severity. It is greatly dreaded by invalids ; but when accompanied by a very clear atmosphere, which it generally is, it is bracing and exhilarating to those in tolerable health. The inhabitants of the country are rather partial to it, and sometimes say, "C'est un bon mistral." It is called "Le grand cantonnier," from its good effects in repairing the roads after bad weather. The mistral is not nearly so bad as the Bise, or north-east wind, which is comparatively rare at Cannes, owing to the sheltering hill of Vallauris. I don't feel inclined to-day, however, to make the best of the mistral, for it is an exceedingly gloomy and ill-tempered one. The Esterels are very dark, and each conical hill is strongly outlined against the higher ranges behind. They look wonderfully near—so do the islands ; it

* Emile Negrin.

seems as if one might almost shake hands with the Bedouins on the one side, and the inhabitants of Napoule on the other. The sea is a leaden grey, set off by dusky green stripes, and a sickly bit of sunshine on the horizon, and the sky is so like the sea, you can scarcely tell the one from the other. The coast-guard man has been walking up and down all morning enveloped in a huge cloak, stamping his feet and nursing his fingers, not at all unlike a Scotch hackney-coachman. There has been something falling from the sky, that looks as if the angels must have been shaking out their feather-beds, as a little child once said—but the feathers are *very* small—*very* far between. Annette indeed has gone the length of boldly calling things by their right names, and she rushed to my room this morning, shouting out, “La neige ! la neige !” but very soon it passed away, and was no more seen. The umbrella or stone-pines look more cheery than anything else to-day, as if they were thinking that they might perchance be of a little more use in the world than usual. Perhaps I have told you about these fine old gnarled pines, with their rich green tops, shaped like umbrellas, which extend in a long line close to the sea, beginning just below this house. They are really magnificent trees—the only fine pines hereabouts. I should think that there are thirty or forty of them ; and there is what looks like a broad belt of green brushwood, extending all along the coast beside them, which I fancy will turn into juvenile umbrellas by and bye.

Sooth to say, it is every bit as cold as you can be in Scotland ; but then it makes a marvellous difference, that our winter is only of a day or two—that perchance to-morrow we may have the brightest, hottest sunshine, and that we have green leaves, and gay flowers, and sweet odours in spite of this temporary misunderstanding of the elements. But I do declare that “behind the clouds the sun has been shining,” just as it does in our dark days of life, and here it comes struggling forth. It will be a fine day to-morrow. Already the days are lengthening imperceptibly, and I can hardly realize how much darker you are than we are. On the shortest day here, the sun rose at a quarter past seven, and set about four.

December 29.—“Et tu Cannes !” Think of real snow lying on the ground ; think of a white Cannes this morning ! but, as I expected, a bright sun and a smooth sea. Shining out amongst the snow there are pretty crimson and pink roses, and orange-flowers, with their smooth green foliage, not one whit discomfited at this unexpected turn of affairs, for snow is very rare at Cannes, and one is called to look at it with as much *empressement* as one might be expected to feel in Scotland, if a shower of humming-birds or fire-flies took place.

Have I ever told you about the *sand-baths*, which are considered peculiarly good at Cannes ? During the months of June, July, August, and September, many wonderful cures

are worked by means of burying people all but their heads—over which are extended white umbrellas—in the burning sand of a burning noon-day. After an hour of this, they are taken out, wrapped in a woollen covering, and remain for some time stretched on a mattress, exposed to the sun. Rheumatism and inflammation, and neuralgia and spine complaints, and various other maladies are thus successfully treated, while a distinguished physician at Paris has thus expressed himself:—"Cherchez-vous à recouvrer une santé perdue? Je vous dirai: Ensablez-vous! voulez-vous conserver un bon tempérément? Je vous dirai encore: Ensablez-vous!" So much the historian of Cannes* tells us, but I can give you a good deal more of original information. Odoni tells me that sand-baths were invented by a peasant in the neighbourhood of Turin, about forty years ago. He was very eccentric, and even in the zenith of his popularity, when he was curing fine ladies and gentlemen by the dozen, he never gave up his peasant habiliments, consisting of wooden sabots, bare legs, black skin, and rough cloth. Neither would he accept of the munificent rewards pressed upon him; he took only the moderate fee of a country doctor. Of course, he was detested by the learned faculty of physicians, who persecuted him in every way; and at last were charitably suspected by his admirers of poisoning him, for his death was very sudden. One of his triumphs consisted in curing in a trice a very sceptical doctor, who was oppor-

* *Une Saison à Cannes.*

tunely thrown off his horse and dangerously hurt at the very door of the peasant's hut ! If Le Roi, as he was always called, had kept to his discovery of sand-baths, I daresay he would have had more credit therefrom ; but he pretended to cure also by a kind of mesmerism, and by rubbings, strongly resembling Mr. Beveridge's system, so that there is nothing new under the sun. He also encouraged the belief of his possessing magical powers, and always carried about with him a certain little book, written in characters which none could decipher, and which many believed to be a present from the devil. Le Roi had one very unkingly propensity,—he was terribly afraid of thunder, and during a storm was invariably found crouched into an empty wine cask, hugging his dearly beloved and diabolical little volume.

I do not think that the statements as to the freedom from intoxication in France are quite correct. It is true that the effects of it are not so outwardly visible as in other countries, and the sight of an intoxicated person in the streets is comparatively rare. But the evil *does* exist here, and to a large degree. Men-servants and others congregate in the auberges and cafés, and drink St. George, a stronger wine than *vin ordinaire*, and brandy, which they get for a sou a glass. The constant fête-days increase the evil, which even as in England presses heavily upon the feminine part of the community. The other morning Annette came in with her eyes swollen with crying, and her cheeks quite white. I found out that her father had got drunk, which is his custom every

Sunday, not to speak of other fête-days, and had beaten his wife dreadfully. Poor Annette's grief for her mother, who, she said, was "*trop brave*," was very touching. I made her take me to see her to-day. She is a nice, respectable-looking woman—living in rather an untidy but tolerably clean house, up a stair in an old quaint part of Cannes—not at all unlike a Scotch dwelling of the same class ; indeed, if it had not been for the language, and the sight of the orange groves and the palm-tree outside the window, I would have fancied myself in Scotland. Then there were Christmas cakes, of which Annette's mother made me eat some and *pocket* more—just like the customs of the poor people in Scotland with their New Year's cakes. These were made of oil, sugar, flour, and orange-flower water ; but the oil was predominant, and it tasted so like train oil, that I fancied myself turning Esquimaux. I have been in several parts of Cannes to-day, where I never was before, shopping and visiting some poor people ; but the want of *patois* is an insuperable bar to intercourse. I wonder that people who live much in these localities do not make a point of acquiring it. Nothing can be done, either in missionary work or in social kindness, among the peasants without it ; and the trouble of the acquisition would be well repaid, for they seem a nice, simple, kindly set of people, though not peculiarly intelligent. One place I went to was such a droll little shop—in the "Grande Rue,"—as they call a long unpaved narrow street, with a gutter in the middle. This shop had odd windows, and

unexpected steps, and original receptacles for wares—a most old-world-looking shop ; the sole remnant of fashionable life being a *crinoline* hung up in a prominent position, and looking deliciously out of character.

A very sad thing happened here the other day. A young wife and mother, who was subject to faintings from heart complaint, fell into the fire, and burnt herself frightfully. I went to see her, and I never saw anything so dreadful ; but there she was lying in bed, with everything about her as clean and white as snow, and so tranquil and patient—though the pain must have been awful, she did not utter a groan. There were two little children—one very ill in the other room, where it was tenderly hushed and nursed by a neighbour. Dr. Chalmers's heart would have been gladdened, and his theories encouraged, by what I have seen and heard here of the kindness of the poor to the poor—but indeed, where do you *not* find this ? Last night this poor woman sank under her agonies, and to-day she was buried. I was much struck by the genuine patient sorrow of the poor husband, of whom they said, “*Il l'aime beaucoup !*” and now she has gone from him.

LETTER X.

CHATEAU STE. MARGUERITE, *December 30.*—I went to-day, with Mademoiselle L. R., the pleasant and intelligent daughter of the French Protestant pastor at Cannes, to see the hermitage and chapel of St. Cassien, which is about a mile from this ; neither are very interesting, and the hermit is only a good old body, looking tolerably like his vocation, by means of a long white beard, and a long black robe. There is, however, great interest attached to the eminence on which the hermitage and chapel are built, which bears every appearance of being artificial, rising abruptly in the midst of a perfectly flat country, and covered thickly by magnificent old gnarled oaks, and pines, and very fine cypresses. It is the finest and most varied wood that I have seen out of England ; and the sere leaves of the oaks formed a thick English-looking carpet of russet brown, giving out that delicious musical sound of the crisp leaves when pressed under foot. One could fancy a huge temple

of the Druids amongst those glorious oaks and cypresses ; however, we must put up with the Romans. In their days it was designated Ara-luci, or Autel du bois Sacré, and a temple of Venus was built on it, which was destroyed by an Abbé of the monastery of the Lérins, in the seventh century, who upon its site and ruins built a church, dedicated to St. Stephen, the first martyr. St. Jean Cassien, whose name is given to the hermitage and chapel, was a celebrated theologian and author of several Latin books ; and he took an active part in one of the theological tourneys of his time, defending Chrysostom of Constantinople against Theophilus of Alexandria. He was born in Scythia in 372, and after having spent part of his life in the Holy Land, in the monastery of Bethlehem, he travelled to Rome, and from thence to Marseilles, where he died, after having founded a convent and a monastery there. There is no reason to suppose that he ever resided at Cannes, certainly never at the sacred mount, which in his days was dedicated to a heathen divinity ; but it is conjectured that the monks of St. Victor (Marseilles), who had then some property in the Lérins, gave the name of their founder St. Cassien, to the Christian edifices and ancient locality so recently rescued from Paganism. According to some, however, the name of Cassien is derived from a corruption of the last three words of the sentence, in which five begging monks, who lived on the mount, demanded charity,—“La carita per cinq que sian.”* There has been

* See *Une Saison à Cannes*.

much discussion relating to two other probabilities of the original purpose of this mound, if it was indeed artificial ;— one that it was a tumulus, formed to mark a burying-place, and the other, that it was to commemorate a battle ; but this is all conjecture, for no bones have been found to indicate the former, and neither inscription nor any certain tradition to prove the latter. M. Jean Raynaud, indeed, has carefully examined the locality, and he is decidedly of opinion, that the whole of the mound is a natural formation, and that the portions of masonry which are still found there, and which some have supposed to be remains of the ancient church, are of comparatively modern date, and only for the purpose of supporting the sides, when the trees were planted. That could not be yesterday, however, for magnificent old veterans they are, and the panoramic views from that mound surpass anything I have seen ; the sea, the hills, the snowy mountains, the islands, the tower, seen through the thick branches of those oaks, are charming. There is a grand fête held in honour of St. Cassien, at the chapel, once a year, on the 23d of July, which is the most popular one of Cannes, and it is said that the mound then presents a most animated and picturesque appearance. St. Cassien originally belonged to the monastery of St. Honorat, from whence it passed into the possession of the State. From the State again it was bought, in 1793, by eighty individuals of Cannes, who paid eighty-four francs each. The subdivision of property has now increased the number of shareholders to upwards of

2000, in infinitesimal shares. Thus one gentleman, Dr. Sève, has four-eightieths in right of his grandmother, and sixteen-eightieths in right of his grandfather.

In coming home from St. Cassien, we encountered *a thing* which I could not exactly make out, and I had to jump off my donkey and run after the said thing before I could be perfectly sure of its nature and object. It resembled a long, low bathing machine, with no visible door, and with one very small window in front, out of which dangled two reins ; attached to the reins was the smallest and thinnest of possible donkeys. My own impression was, that it must have been the ghost of a microscopic animalcule, who had returned to earth in the shape of a donkey. On the side of the bathing machine was a large card nailed, and upon this card there was the lively representation of a very large tooth—much bigger than the donkey ; also there was an announcement, that the invisible tenant of the bathing machine was a travelling dentist, who possessed the happy faculty of being able to draw teeth without the least “douleur.” Talking of donkeys, I forgot to tell you that on setting out this morning, my donkey suddenly tumbled down flat on the road ! Luckily I got myself extricated, but the donkey behaved in such a fine lady way, rolling his eyes, and pretending an incapacity for moving, and getting every moment more inclined to be hysterical, that I gave him up for a dead donkey ; however, his master appeared, took a small stone out of his foot, gave him a lecture and a kick,

and up he got and was in remarkably good spirits the rest of the way.

Wednesday, December 31.—I have seen Mr. Woolfield, and am now qualified to answer your questions in a business-like way. Those new villas with gardens sloping towards the sea, of which you have heard, exist as yet only in a plan of Mr. Woolfield's, and are not to be begun for a year. Few of the present villas are built between the road and the sea—most of them are situated between the road and the hills, which is considered a better exposure for invalids, on account of the shelter from the mistral, and the greater distance from the exciting air of the Mediterranean, of which some people are afraid. There are very few properties for sale at present,—the French proprietors find it much more profitable to let their houses than to sell them. There are no large estates, as in England, but a number of small ones. There are nine or ten English proprietors, Admiral Pakenham, Mr. Woolfield, Lord Londesborough, Lord Brougham, the Rev. Mr. Sym, Mr. Desanges, Lady Oxford, Mr. Evans, and Mr. Crookinden ;—the latter bought property the other day, consisting of an excellent château and twenty-five acres of land, which is a great deal here, and only paid £4500 for the whole. The Château de la Bocca, which belongs to Mr. Sym, is for sale ; it is a very pretty place, close to the sea, and the garden juts out upon the sea rocks. The house is a large and good one, and tolerably fur-

nished, and the price asked is only £2000 ;—of course there is no land attached to it, except the garden and pretty shrubbery. Wooden houses, my dear friend, don't insult us! Brick houses! like that miserable London of yours! No, no! our houses are all of good, solid, handsome, Scotch-looking stone. Certainly we don't have Newcastle coals—but if we had, it would really be “ sending coals to Newcastle,” when we have that nice hot sun! Wood fires besides, when you have a good pair of bellows and no smoke, are by no means to be despised, with their large logs, and pretty little fagots and *pommes de pins*; not to mention the constant occupation which they provide for idle masculine hands. The truth is, that unless people are resolutely resolved to be uncomfortable, they can make themselves quite comfortable here with a little care, and sense, and good management. One hears a great deal of the discomforts of foreign life; but in reality they arise chiefly from difference of habits, and the difficulty people have in accommodating themselves to anything but their own peculiar ways and ideas of comfort.

We dined last night at Mr. Woolfield's—a most agreeable party. The society at Cannes is very pleasant—so simple and kindly, without formality or overdressing. Everybody is interested in everybody, and yet people are not subjected to the undue surveillance which is generally the result of kindness in a small society. Mr. and Mrs. Woolfield are universally liked and respected; their hospitality and kindness and helpfulness are unbounded; and as every-

body goes to them in every difficulty and perplexity, they have enough to do. When Mr. Woolfield first settled at Cannes, he bought the Château St. George from Sir Herbert Taylor, and almost rebuilt it: the result is an Italian villa which might belong to fairy land. The house and grounds are the prettiest I ever saw; and, being close to the sea, the views are exquisite. Mr. Woolfield, however, tired of it, and sold it to M. Courant, its present proprietor. Having a passion for a higher architecture, he then set to work and built the Château de Ste. Ursule, a stately castellated building on a height, but not half so charming as the Château St. George. He tired of that too, sold it quite recently to Lord Londesborough, and he is now building, or commencing to build, a third château! In the meantime, Lord Brougham has lent him his house during his absence. I wish I could describe to you the extraordinary beauty of these skies at night. They are always more brilliant than in our frostiest nights at home; but when, as last night, a touch of frost is added to the air, the stars and planets sparkle and glow with a strange radiance. Jupiter, Orion, Sirius, and all the host of them, seem to dilate and come near—standing out from the calm blue ether in stereoscopic solidity, and giving one a feeling that there may be some danger of their tumbling out! With that said frostiness, it was curious to contrast the magnificent orange-trees which we passed in going up to the door of the Château Eléonore Louise—thick laden with large golden fruit and clusters of white blossom—gleaming like gold and silver

in the moonlight. Do you remember George Herbert's beautiful lines,—

“ O that I were an orange-tree,
That busy plant!
Then should I ever laden be,
And never want
Some fruit for Him that dressed me.

“ But we are still too young or old,
The man is gone
Before we do our wares unfold :
So we freeze on,
Until the grave increase our cold.”

Annette has been telling me of a custom here in which she greatly rejoices. A fortnight before Christmas, they place some grains of wheat in a saucer—enough to cover the inside of it ; a little water is added day by day. The grain sprouts up fresh and green, and by Christmas is about as high as one's finger. On Christmas-day it is taken to the church, and blessed by the priest. It is then carefully planted in the middle of a field or farm, and is firmly believed to bring a blessing on the soil. A fête is observed at Cannes, of which I never heard before, but which I suppose is common to all Roman Catholic countries—I mean the fête for the benediction of the domestic animals which help man in his labour. They are conducted to the vicinity of a church, and the priests recite prayers over them for a blessing, and for their continued preservation—and also sprinkle them with holy water ! If any religious ceremony could avail in checking

cruelty to animals in our country, we might borrow this idea, which is a beautiful one. It is a very ancient ceremony; when St. Gregory the Great gave his instructions to St. Augustine, the apostle of England, he recommended him thus to consecrate the horses, oxen, etc.

New Year's Day, 1857.—Many happy new years to you and dear J., and the rest of the home circle! Everybody wishes everybody a good new year here just as you are doing in Scotland at this moment. Everybody has on her fête-day ribbons and cap; and everybody insists on shaking hands with you till your fingers ache again. I underwent this ceremony from Annette, and the postman, and a cabman, and a donkey-girl, and a friend's demonstrative housemaid: my hand was in poignant distress for some time, and my little finger is still quite an invalid. It is a great scandal to the French women that we English go about on fête-days with our ordinary dresses—a custom I did not find out till too late for remedy. Annette brought me a bouquet of pinks, roses, orange-flowers, and myrtle, and an enormous one for “*Monsieur Seer David*,” which she presented with very red cheeks, but most hearty shakings of the hand. The baker sent me two bottles of delicious ~~scent~~ and flowers, while his daughter, a prim little damsel of four, with a mob cap, came to spend the day, uninvited, with Juliet, Amy, and Charlie, and was very happy in a solemn way. This same *boulanger* is a great ally of ours,—comes to guard the house when Odoni

is out with us, and is altogether charming. I do like the *free-and-easiness* of them all so much. Annette's mother came, as a matter of course, to return my call, and have a chat and a glass of wine ; the chat consisting in a good many unintelligible words on both sides, and affecting appeals to Annette for assistance.

January 2.—To-night we saw a most interesting and somewhat rare astronomical sight—the occultation of Jupiter by the moon. I hope you saw it too, but I am sure that you could not see it in your gloomy atmosphere as we did in our pure and transparent skies. We watched the brilliant orb of Jupiter, with his four satellites, slowly—so slowly, approach and enter the dark mass of the old moon ; for an hour the huge world was hidden by our little satellite, even, as in our life, alas, the greater is ever obscured by the less, and then majestically and gracefully it emerged in recovered dignity from the bright new crescent on the other side.

LETTER XI.

NICE, CHAUVAIN'S HOTEL, *January 22.*—After a fortnight of severe and painful illness, spent in the Hôtel de la Poste at Cannes, I rallied sufficiently to come hither yesterday. The drive from Antibes to Nice is not very pretty, with the exception of its magnificent olive-trees. Neither is the Var so fine a river as its huge bed of gravel would lead one to expect ; but if it is ever full from brink to brink it must be a glorious stream. Its currents are very strong and rapid, and one can picture the almost death-struggle of Lorenzo Benoni, in his famous crossing of the boundary between his own beloved land—in which was death, and the foreign shore—on which was safety. The view from the bridge, looking up the Var to the Alps, is quite magnificent. One of the mountains is in the form of a fortress ; that is to say, it is crowned by natural rocks, taking a rampart-like and castellated form. A few steps further we had crossed the river. We were in Italy ! The soft sounds of another lan-

guage greeted us. We saw Italian words written over the door of the Douane, and encountered the darker, handsomer uniforms, and finer faces and figures of the Sardinian soldiers. It cannot fail that one's first thoughts and words, in crossing the frontier, ever are, "God bless Italy!" What a wonderful land it must be, in spite of all its misery and degradation, to possess such an influence over the hearts and imaginations of all! Here, in Piémont, however, there is blessed liberty, —one can love the land without sorrowing over it. I looked very respectfully and admiringly at the first Italian baby we met, especially when I remembered that, supposing it to be precocious, it could speak Italian, and I couldn't! God only knows what that baby and its contemporaries may do and suffer and achieve in poor Italy—in noble Italy—when they have long ceased to be babies. Surely, surely Piémont will never fraternize with the tyrants against the rest of her country.

January 26.—I have been ill again, and am still in bed, but it amuses me to write, so I shall follow the plan of J.'s charming letter, and try to make you *see* me. My room is quite an English one, even to a toilette and glass—the first I have seen—nothing visible from the window but red tiles and green *jaloussies*; but if there are no sights, there are plentiful sounds. What is that chanting, so quick and careless, yet with something strangely wild and solemn in it? Nobody here to scold me; so I get up and look out of the win-

dow for a moment. In the gay street I see a coffin decorated with white lace,—a gaily-dressed priest,—two young choristers, in white robes, chanting the requiem, and not more than two mourners ; the coffin is borne carelessly and hurriedly along. Who is this that has gone so lonely to his long home in the morning ? Where has the soul gone to dwell and never die ? Other sounds there are : a hand organ—two pianos—a man with a glorious voice, and a woman's high treble, singing Italian and French songs—something in the room just over my head, apparently with wooden sabots, which employs itself in walking up and down every morning for three hours—ditto every night. I suspect, too, that it tumbles logs of wood on the floor, for the pleasure of picking them up and throwing them down again. That something or somebody is a profound mystery. I have visitors in my sick-room occasionally. Knock at the door—Odoni's black head is poked through the opening. With the most doleful accents, he impresses on Mademoiselle the necessity of *bon courage*, and then vanishes. Knock again—enter the Italian housemaid. How pretty she is ! What a pale, pure face, with such soft brown eyes, and a becoming handkerchief of net and fringe tied over her black hair. She has rheumatism and heart-complaint, and more work than two strong women ought to undertake. Her sister is laid up in bed at the top of the house from over-work, and H. has been to see her, so Adèle is very grateful, and likes to linger in my room, and tell about her troubles, and teach me

new Italian phrases ; for she is very fond of speaking pure Italian, instead of the ugly Nizzard *patois*. A pleasant, cheerful voice in the passage, and another knock. It is Dr. G. Did you ever see such intelligent eyes, and such firm, well-cut features ? His care and kindness lighten illness even to a stranger in a strange land.

February 4.—Another relapse, and two changes of room. I have been promoted to a south room ; such a thing had not been to be found for love or money, so crammed is Nice this winter, and south rooms are at a premium. It is a marked feature in these strange southern climes, and one which we are quite unacquainted with in our darker regions, that a north room is here considered death to an invalid, and even east or west is dreaded—the full, sunny south is the thing, and certainly it makes a wonderful difference. For this advantage, all others are overlooked, so I am very thankful for a small, narrow slip of a room, with its white bed and mosquito curtains close to the door.

N.B.—The ladies in Bermuda use their mosquito nets for ball dresses, and restore them to the mosquitoes when they go home ! Here is a deep window down to the ground, in which I sometimes sit in the sun when I want to see the world. Will you look out of it with me this morning ? I have gone there to listen as well as to look. Here is a group of three Italian singers. How beautifully their voices harmonize in that wild half-plaintive, half-cheerful melody—one bass and two tenors !

I am sure they are a respectable family. The father, a handsome, picturesque Italian, with castanets. The mother pale, so pale, but very clean in her nice black dress and white worked cuffs, and handkerchief head-dress, and large gold ear-rings and brooch. There is a little child clinging to her, and the plainer woman playing on the guitar, is certainly the child's aunt. Nobody listens much, which is a pity ; an English drawing-room would be in raptures with those voices. That elderly woman, in the droll close cap, pushes by, and does not even look behind her, so occupied is she with another branch of the fine arts ; she is carrying some little stucco statues, which I am sure she has just bought for a sick boy or girl at home. Here comes H. with such a pretty little bouquet—violets and geranium leaves, and the tiniest pink rosebuds ;—they look slightly astonished, perhaps, at the cold weather, but are very lovely and fragrant for all that. To-day, by one of those rapid changes for which Nice is famous, there is a hot, brilliant Italian sun.

February 6.—If you are not tired of my window, look out once more this glorious morning, and I will show you all the lions. This room is on the *entre-sol* just above the *rez de chaussée*, so that I could shake hands with the passers by ; I am so near those three-cornered hats of the innumerable priests that I could pull them off. Hats there are of all sorts and shapes : the broad black straw ones of the old wives, the pretty white *plates* of the young ones, and look !

there is a specimen of the genuine old Nice head-dress, now almost extinct ;—the hair is drawn off the face, and a broad band of black velvet goes round the head, above which rises an extraordinary erection of white muslin and wire sticking straight up at the back of the head. The name of this street, which is one of the great thoroughfares, is the Quai St. Jean Baptiste. It is bordered by a row of trees, and a wall going deep down as a bulwark to the river, which it does not seem to require, for stretching out in front there is an immense reach of gravel, in the midst, or rather at one side of which, flows the Paglione, which, by reason of the recent rains, has swollen to the size of one of our small *burns*,—then another high wall,—then the Boulevard du Pont Neuf, the crowded resort on Sundays. On one side, close to my window, there is the Pont Neuf itself, which is always thronged with motley groups of passers by. This, however, is not the only enlivenment to the view. A maid-servant once left her place because her master gave her too much trouble—being “one of the washingest gentlemen that ever she seed.”— Well, Nice is one of the washingest places that ever *I* seed ! “Washing-day,” that word of doom and dread to husbands, and discomfort to households, is here merged in the constant recurrence of its disastrous soap-suds. Here we can boast of a perpetual “washing-day.” Wherever there are tanks, or little ponds, or fresh-water rivulets, running into the sea, there do you see dozens, nay scores, nay hundreds, of washerwomen kneeling in coarse yellow baskets, and

washing and wringing, and scrubbing and spreading, and joining the brooks in their own sweet Tennysonian occupations ; for the washerwoman as well as the water may say—

“ I chatter over stony ways,
 In little sharps and trebles ;
I bubble into eddying bays,
 I babble on the pebbles.

“ I chatter, chatter as I go,
 To join the brimming river ;
For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever ! ”

However, as they wear bright colours,—gay petticoats, and yellow or crimson handkerchiefs shading the black hair and dark dreamy eyes of the south, one can pardon the washerwomen after all ; but those long, vandyked lines of clothes flapping and steaming along the beautiful shore, and by the brink of every water-course, and there, just in front of us, along the wide beach of the Paglione, what *can* be said of them ? They are English clothes, moreover, so are wholly uninteresting, though yesterday there *was* a broad crimson nondescript article of clothing, which *was* a joy to my eyes, and must have been Italian, from its gorgeous hue. If you squeeze yourself into the corner of my window, on one side you can see the blue blue, wonderful sea, which cannot help sparkling and quivering to the rays of that golden, wonderful sun. Then go into the other corner, and you will see the grand old château, on its high eminence, surrounded by circles of cypresses. The old

town stretches far up the castle hill ; and between it and us you can see a dome and two odd-looking spires or *kiosks*, with an oriental look, which one often traces here—they belong to the cathedral. There now, you have finished my window !

February 7.—To-day and yesterday I have had short drives. The sun is of Bengal heat, though the air is bitterly cold in the shade : clouds of dust—a glare of white, hot roads and houses—crowded bustling boulevards and streets, and above, in strange contrast, the calm, cool, solemn, snowy Alps. It is surely a tropical sun—such as I never felt or imagined ;—altogether, it makes one murmur longingly the pretty hymn of Mrs. Hemans—

“ *There* shall no tempest blow,
 No scorching noon tide heat ;
There shall be no more snow,
 No weary wandering feet.”

The air is the most curious air that ever anybody inhaled, and I should think unfavourable for keeping the peace. It is both exciting and depressing—instead of coming in refreshed and soothed, one has a longing to box the ears of all one’s friends, and to cry for an hour after doing it. I am sure that there must be a great difference between this climate and that of Canues ; there is not nearly so much of this exciting and irritating air, and the winds are not so piercing, neither is the climate quite so changeable. The

close vicinity of the snowy mountains, from which the winds sweep down unmitigated, *must* make this a colder place than little, sheltered Cannes. The great dryness and exciting qualities of the climate, however, make it a most suitable one for those who require stimulating after severe illnesses, or who are suffering from chronic complaints ; and many kinds of bronchial affections are cured here. It is not good for sufferers from nervous irritability, or congestive headaches, or consumptive complaints. During my drive to-day I was constrained to acknowledge the exceeding beauty and pictorialness of the mountain scenery around Nice, and far far away in the blue misty distance, I caught a peep of an *Esterel*, which seemed quite home-like. I saw a great deal that was characteristic in the older parts of the town. There is no mistaking that one is out of France,—except in the New Town, where if you do find Italian names of streets and shops, you have the French translation underneath. Almost every house, even the commonest and poorest, has its covered balcony, even up to the top storeys. I saw one to-day very high up, and instead of shading the inmates from the noon-day sun, it was, of course, filled with the results of a washing ; but as the articles hung out to dry were gay coloured handkerchiefs and aprons, I did not grumble. Some of the houses are flat-roofed, and communicate with each other, forming a regular promenade.

To-day my democratic feelings received a shock. H. and I were driving along rather a narrow street, when up came

a splendid scarlet courier, and made authoritative gesticulations to the coachman, who seemed very unwilling to obey, but the scarlet lawgiver was peremptory, so we had to draw up meekly to the pavement, while a smart barouche whirled past us, followed by two outriders in blue velvet jackets, "silk velvet," as I heard H. whisper softly. It was the Russian Empress ; but, of course, I could see nothing but two veiled and bonneted ladies. The Grand Duchess Helena makes herself very popular here. She has rheumatic gout, like the whole winter-population of Nice, and has consulted my doctor, who is charmed with her. She is a remarkably clever, well-informed woman, and up to all the politics of Europe, which unfortunately is not considered a lady-like accomplishment. She is moreover, it is said, much inclined to all that is *good*—has the Count St. George, a Genevese gentleman, eminent for his piety, frequently to dine with her, and goes to hear the preaching of M. Pilatte, the Vaudois pastor, with whom she has also long conversations.

The King of Sardinia has been here—an event which threw Nice into a wonderful commotion. You would hear of the King's ball from the L.'s ; the next night the King gave a concert, to which my father also went ; and the day after, he and Lord Stopford, and the British Consul, being appointed a deputation, presented an address from the English inhabitants of Nice. His Majesty was very "gracious and condescending," as the newspapers said the next day ; but I don't know what else he could have been. He ought to

have been very much flattered, for certainly one Scotch philosopher is worth a good many kings. Is that a “bad sentiment?” The King of Sardinia is very popular with the people; one day at Cannes, when a Nice letter arrived, our demonstrative Italian servant kissed the King’s head stamped upon it. It must be confessed that the English do owe him a great deal, for many are the privileges and liberties they enjoy here. There is an Episcopalian Church, where Mr. Childers and Mr. Harris officiate,—a Free Church, which this winter has had the services of the Rev. J. Smith, a most excellent man,—a Vaudois Church, Italian and German Protestant services, besides a meeting of the Plymouth Brethren. How different from the other Italian States!

Among the many interesting people congregated at Nice, I must tell you of one who has indeed been a comfort in a sick-room. Mr. Stevenson, an English clergyman, author of those delightful books on the Psalms, which are known to every one. How pleasant it is to see him come in, with his kindly smile and most pleasant-toned voice! He blows the fire and arranges the wraps on the sofa in the most home-like manner, and he is telling one all the time this interesting anecdote and that striking illustration, or a thought or a feeling which immediately calls out an answering one. Then he reads a little, and offers up a few words of prayer, such as I should like all whom I love to hear—so childlike yet so full.

LETTER XII.

MAISON SAUTIRON, QUARTIER BRANCOLAR, CIMIEZ,
February 11.—Oh, the blessing of silence! the appreciation of what one generally never thinks about, is like a new sense given. How delightful it is to open these windows and look forth at that lovely quiet view, and look in again on my dear little parlour and hear no noise! no carriages, no hand-organs, no yells, no laughter, nothing that jars or pains this mysterious “nervous system,” to which the present generation are such slaves. I came out here with H., and have taken a small house about two miles from Nice, upon the Cimiez, a hill rising to the Alps, which is now almost covered with villas, for the climate is much milder, and indeed quite different from Nice, being sheltered by the mountains, and much farther from the Mediterranean. Invalids who can neither breathe nor sleep in the town are sent up here; it is almost milder than Cannes, except when the wind blows from the north-east.

I have a dining-room, drawing-room, one good-sized bedroom, and two very small ones, kitchen and large pantry, a nice little garden, which will soon be gay with flowers, and a trellised vine-walk round it, and two or three orange-trees. All this I have for eighty francs a month, including oranges and flowers, and oh, how pleasant it is to gather one's own oranges ! How J. would luxuriate in the oranges and lemons of those regions ! Their little dots of scent-bags (*vide* our beloved Dr. Antonio) are so full of the perfumed oil that it drops out, scenting the whole room and one's hands for hours. No one could describe himself here as being "seven miles from a lemon !" Mademoiselle Sautiron, the *propriétaire*, who lives in the back settlements, is a French lady, and very kind and attentive. I must introduce you to my window, which is very different from the Chauvain one ;—that lovely view of hill and dale and sea, flushed by the setting sun, is worth seeing. Look out, and to the left, quite close to us, you will see a snow-covered Alp,—just under it runs the famous Genoa road. How rosy the snow does look with its lilac shades and touches ! To-day there was a pure snowy cloud just resting on the real snow, which built up a very high imaginary Alp, but now it has vanished and left only the real mountain, like many a fair day-dream in the midst of our life. First comes a grey, green, lilac, red, brown, and gold-coloured hill ; then a lower range, on the slopes of which are many white villas, with their picturesque red-tiled roofs ;—on the very top of

one of those hills, jutting out between us and the sky, is a Sardinian fort. Then comes a low wooded hill, sloping down till it reaches the town, a few of the houses of which you see between the light graceful branches and dark stems of those large olives, and rising above them is the Grand Château of Nice, while beyond is the Mediterranean, with a few merry, swan-like, little sails upon its blue waters. Between our eyes and the opposite hills and villas, there is a large glen or oblong basin, upon the very brink of which is this Maison Sautiron. It is one immense vineyard and olive-yard, varied by almond-trees, and a few oaks with rich brown withered foliage, and those tall cypresses, which are very common here, and have a strange weird effect : you have them in every possible way,—there are hedges of them,—there are walls of them,—there are isolated sentinels standing, tall and gloomy. This rich little valley is close to the house, and is intersected with the most exquisite little paths,—under the olives and beside the olives, and up there between the cypresses, and down there among the vines ; everywhere there is a little path, and it is the pleasantest spot in the whole world—out of Scotland. But I must stop ;—the sun which was so brilliant when I began to write, has gone to bed, and the rapid darkness of these regions has come on.

February 13.—We have the drollest *fille de chambre* that you can imagine—good, merry, laughing, stumpy Marie,

with a fine *old* brown face, though she is almost young, and a pair of glorious southern eyes, and such magnificent hair. She speaks the Niçois, like all the peasantry here; and it is a strangely harsh *patois*, considering its many Italian terminations. Not a word of Italian is spoken, except by those who have been to school, where, of course, it is always taught; some have no French at all, others, like Marie, a smattering of it. You would laugh if you heard us converse. She begins in French, continues in a happy combination of French and Niçois, and ends in *patois* pure and undefiled. One day she informed me that her husband had two wives, and looked much astonished at my virtuous indignation; —of course I “made a note of it,” but discovered, some hours afterwards, that this instance of bigamy had originated in the tower of Babel. Little Françoise, a droll, dutch-built child of three years old, trots about everywhere after her mamma; she has Marie’s eyes, and the sweetest morsel of a smile, and the absurdest skull-cap that ever disfigured infant. Marie is very merry indeed. If you ring the bell, she tumbles up in ecstasies of laughter, that make you hope you have rung the bell in a very witty manner; if little Françoise goes into a fit of crying, Marie goes into a fit of laughing; in short, she laughs always,—no, not quite always, for now and then a look of sentiment comes into those fine eyes, for she has her troubles as well as her neighbours, and she clasps her hands, and says, “*Pazienza!*” The Niçois “yes” is not *wooey*, like

the French *patois*, nor *oui*, nor *si*, but *ai* or *ay*, like the Scotch.

February 16.—Yesterday was a quiet Sunday,—very different from the last three or four Sundays of the crowded, noisy town, with its carnival music and carnival masks ; even here, however, a trace of the latter found their way—grotesque figures, but with very little apparent fun about them. I sat quietly reading and thinking among the olive-trees, which are here of such ripe age and stateliness, that one might fancy them the brothers and sisters of those which clothed the Mount of Olives. There, among the olives, the *Heimweh* came strongly, but it is very sad how little of it we ever feel for the home everlasting ; is not that a beautiful old proverb,—“Blessed are the Home-sick, for they shall go Home !”

Close to us there is a delicious little Roman amphitheatre, which Murray says the peasants call the *Tino delle Fafe*, or Bath of the Fairies, but I never hear them call it *anything* but “La Grotte.” It is very well preserved, and one never wearies of tracing the galleries and dens, and the different entrances ; and of conjuring up visions of fair ladies, and gladiators, and wild beasts, and Christian martyrs. Near it, in a garden, are the ruins of a large Roman house, the dwelling of the Roman Proconsul ;—somewhere else, though where, I never could quite make out, there is said to be the remains of a temple of Apollo.

A little farther on there is a grand *point de vue*. You emerge from the olive-trees, and find yourself on an elevated platform, commanding a glorious view of the Paglione, the hills, Alps, sea, château, town, Turin road, Antibes and its lighthouse, and the far-away Esterels. A few disjointed ruins are scattered all around ; that was the site of the ancient château, and those are its veritable stones ! Behold all that is left of the once large and flourishing Roman city of Cimiez or Civitas Cemeneliensis, the capital of the Maritime Alps. It is supposed to have had a population of 24,000 inhabitants ; for the amphitheatre held 8000 spectators, and they were generally built for one-third of the population. Poor, old, stately, mouldering Romans of Cimiez, would they not be mortified if they knew that the chief fame of this flourishing colony now arises from the shelter it affords to John Bull's rheumatic gout ! Its salubrity was well known to the ancients, however ; for a Cornelia Salonine, wife of the Emperor Gallius, went there to recover her health, though I hope and trust a Roman empress could not have been afflicted with rheumatism.

February 19.—

“ Had I a cave on some far desert shore,
There would I [not] weep my woes, nor ceaseless deplore ; ”

on the contrary, smile broadly in approval of both cave and desert. Even this little retreat is scarcely quiet enough

—visitors come every day, but almost all are pleasant, and some more than merely pleasant. Amongst the latter is Dr. M. O'S., well known as an Irish controversialist writer ; the interest and elevated tone of his conversation won all our hearts, the first time we met him and his family at a table-d'hôte. I wish you had heard Dr. O'S. quote from Miss Holford's poetry. Did you ever hear of her ? She lived forty years ago,—wrote one poem, which was quenched by a bitter review, accusing it of being an imitation of Sir Walter Scott. She wrote no more, and died. A sad tale of genius, is it not ? One could imagine the hidden woe of it. The fragments, as recited by this gentleman, were perfectly exquisite. I never heard anything so touching, the voice, with its rich Irish accent faltered, and the lips quivered, and tears stood in his eyes.

February 21.—The *cuisine* here is our weakest point. At first it consisted of grease, pure and unmitigated, so I resolved to try the nearest restaurant, which was two miles off ;—very small, very costly, very cold, very peculiar in hue —a happy combination of snuff colour and neutral tint—were our dinners. So I gave that up, and descended into the kitchen with considerable dignity, to instruct old Marie in the art of boiling a chicken and *semoule*, after a fashion I remembered in the palmy days of the Château Ste. Marguerite. The chicken was rather a triumph ; that is to say —though it did not look in the least like a boiled chicken

—there was no grease. The *semoule*, to be sure, came up like a soup gone deranged ; but, on the whole, I was looking forward with complacency to teaching the old idea how to cook for the remainder of my stay, when a good angel appeared in the shape of a very fat, kind Italian man-cook, belonging to an English neighbour. He was horrified at our forlorn condition, and carried off with him a gigot of mutton. That gigot of mutton had been upon my mind for a long time,—what was to be done with it ? There was no spit, there was no oven ; even if it could have been coaxed into the stew-pan, it must have remained there like the ornaments suspended in bottles. Yesterday, I assure you, my feelings bordered on ecstasy when that leg of mutton made its appearance roasted, yes, actually roasted ! This cook is to roast a chicken another day, and a piece of beef another, and his name is Achilles !

You would be amused at the tiny joints of lamb which we have had all winter both here and at Cannes ; they never get any bigger, and are so tiny, indeed, that one has lively apprehensions of their having appertained to cats in their living, uncooked state. One day at Cannes, D. made a remark of this kind to his old French servant, intending to be outrageously witty ; but she took it quite *au pied de la lettre*—told him that there was not any likelihood of it, for cats were only eaten in the more distant country villages, never at Cannes—that she did not see why a nice plump cat should not be very good, though being Canoise

herself, she had never tasted one ! After all, Captain Cook, the navigator, was cured of an illness by puppy broth. What *is* in a name ?

The other day I wanted a sketch of old Marie, so with great glee she hunted up all her smartest garments and brought them to me to choose her toilette from. Very smart, and uninteresting, and modern, some of them were ; and very much mortified was she, when I discarded them, and chose an old black velvet jacket, and a very old orange handkerchief, and a pink apron, and a coarse blue petticoat, and her hair in that pretty thick roll, entwined with velvet, which is invariable here among young and old,—that is to say, the velvet is for high days and holidays, and common worsted braid is for every day. These rolls are worn very much like the style of hairdressing which has been so prevalent in England, and which must have been borrowed from the Nizzard fashion ; the roll of the *paysannes'* redundant hair, even that of the old women, is, however, twice or thrice as thick. Marie would be nothing without her ornaments, however, which she brings in a box to exhibit. Such handsome ear-rings ! such solid gold rings ! These belonged to her “grandmamma,” she says, and there is a magnificent golden heart and cross, which go round her neck with a black velvet ribbon. Poor old Marie ! She must once have been a bonnie lassie ; and she does not deny it, but giggles and blushes, and professes not to remember how many wooers she had before she made the unhappy marriage,

the strife and the cares of which have helped to age her before her time.

February 22.—Such a sweet spring day—reminding one of the remark made by a little child—“If the *wrong side* of heaven be so beautiful, what will the *right side* be?” Lovely white fleecy clouds temper the fierce rays of the sun, while some days of rain have given the softness to the air which the too great dryness generally prevents. The wild-flowers are beginning to carpet the earth already,—violets, buttercups, daisies, and a lovely little lilac and white blossom, resembling one of our garden annuals. In a week or two, they say that the flowery carpet will be quite a thick one. In the vineyard there is a picturesque well cut in a cool, deep grotto, and it is enough to send a fern-fancier crazy with delight ;—its walls are covered thick with the green graceful fronds of the Maiden-hair, or *Capillus veneris*, while the roof is hung with living stalactites of the same loveliest of plants. It does not grow in Scotland at all, except in greenhouses, and is only found, I believe, in the very south of England. The lovely Hart’s-tongue, or *Ceterach Officinarum*, is another fern rare in our country, which grows here most freely. I have one specimen at home which I shut up in a hot-bed all winter, while here it springs from every fissure in every dry wall and rock, far from the sound or scent of water, and exposed to every wind that blows. There is a very rare fern found

here, far among the mountains, called, I think, *Pteris Critica*; I have seen a dried specimen of it, and it appears to be the same as a beautiful Jamaica fern which we keep in hot-houses.

“Beautiful ferns,

Much have I loved when ye are reared in greenest strength to stray,
And mark your feathery stems upraised in lichenèd ruin grey;
Or in the fairy moonlight bent, to meet the silvering hue,
Or glistening yet, when noon is high, with morn’s unvanished dew.” *

The vineyards and their construction, and various processes, recall vividly two Scripture illustrations and descriptions.—The “vineyard in a very fruitful hill”—the walls built around it, and the fences and supports for the tender vines, the wine-presses and the towers or lodges in the midst; while the increasing disease of the grapes, which has almost stopped the manufacture of the Nice wine, which was once rather celebrated, threatens to exhibit the following beautiful and touching description of desolation, in what was erst a place of joy and fruitfulness:—“Therefore, I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen. And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in their presses: I have made their vintage shouting to cease.” †

* Hollings.

† Isa. xvi. 9, 10.

Is this a very fanciful notion of mine, which haunts me in all my vineyard walks ? a resemblance I find there to what the one universal Church *ought* to be, but *is* not. A place with many dividing walls, necessary for the support of the vines and their different kinds of grapes ; but not one of them a wall of separation. You can walk from vineyard to vineyard, or from portion to portion of the same vineyard, rejoicing in that which is good and pleasant in each, without being once stopped by a bolt or a bar. Would that it were so also with the veritable vineyard of God's Church-militant !

LETTER XIII.

MAISON SAUTIRON, *February 23.*—I have been to call upon the Prior of the Cimiez Monastery, to whom I have a letter of introduction. My companion was an English clergyman, and perhaps it was owing to that fact that the Prior was not particularly civil or glad to see us ; indeed, he bowed us out as quickly as possible. I wished to know about the monastery school, and to see it if possible, as there is a little girl who would like to go to school, to learn reading and writing, and she lives too far from Nice to be sent there. However, all the information I could get was, that it was vacation-time. The Franciscan Monastery of Cimiez is a large one, with a handsome church, in which there are one or two good pictures, by Ludovico Brea, born in 1651, the only master, except Carl Vanloo, to whom Nice has given birth. In the sacristy there are some splendid illuminated MSS. The view from the burying-ground, which I had seen on a former occasion, is beautiful, as the convent occu-

lies a commanding position on the banks of the Paglione, looking down on the Turin road. The burying-ground itself is only interesting from one grave, always kept decorated with flowers, and pointed out with a kindly interest by the monks and some people who were walking about. It was that of a very lovely young wife, who died in a moment two winters ago, and her husband is not yet tired of this office of love.

Monasteries are not in favour with the Sardinian Government. A great many have been suppressed ; and the three which are allowed to remain at Nice—Cimiez, St. Pons, and St. Barthélemie, are only to remain during the lifetime of the present monks—who are to have no successors. One feels sufficient of the romance that attaches at first sight to conventional life, to be sure of the great and dangerous influence this element must have on the uneducated, or morbid or sentimental mind. To-day, what I more strongly felt was the most profound pity for the apparent idleness to be found there, and I longed to give the monks something to do, if it were only to pick oakum. I saw a young monk, listless and languid, and slow-moving, whose hands were large and strong ; and it did seem such a waste of labour that might be available for God and man, to keep him there with no better occupation than the paternosters and genuflexions which but too probably are only to him a name and a ceremony. Still, however, against my better judgment, there is a charm in that convent bell of Cimiez as it sweeps along

hill and dale, with such a silvery chime. Still one pauses to watch with interest those groups of poor people waiting at the porch of the monastery under those glorious ilexes, and beside the old Gothic marble cross, for their dole of soup and broken meat, even as in the olden time.

February 24.—A bitterly cold day, which the Nizzards say is invariably the case on the last day of the Carnival. There has been the ringing of many bells, and the firing of a few guns, and all the world astir at Nice as elsewhere. A place in the windows looking on the Corso costs a guinea, and masks and *bonbons* are the order of the day. I did not venture to go down into the crowd and heat and excitement.

This is the stoniest country that I ever saw. It seems like the stony ground on which no good seed could find room, yet it is not so, for the fatness of all lands is here. Coming up from Nice to Cimiez, a road where every turn ought to show you splendid views, you are tantalized by high walls, which entirely confine the excursions of vision to stone and mortar, and the top of an olive-tree or aggravating palm. Up here the walls disappear, but “dykes” meet you in every direction, while the donkey-roads are paved with huge boulders—stones, stones everywhere! In the north of France it is as bad ; and there the “dykes” are as broad as a pretty wide pathway—in fact are used as such. This puzzled me at first, till I began to think that the space between the two

walls was intended as a receptacle for the superabundant stones of the roads and fields, which gradually filling up formed a pathway!—the roads and fields seeming, however, as stony as before. I shall not soon forget a nice quiet little invalid drive which I had from Nice. I was rather startled by the vehemence of the bumps and jerks, and upon remonstrating, we found that we were driving in the dried-up bed of a river, and that at every step we were ascending and descending small ranges of mountains! In the middle a wheel came off. We got it bolstered up with rope, and succeeded in getting the horses turned, but the wheel ceremony was repeated five times before we got out of the river, which is however a real road, and I believe the only carriage road to St. Barthélemie and the Vallée Obscure. Wheat is much more cultivated here than at Cannes, where the perfumes for Grasse take its place; space is well economized, and it is grown in lines and patches amongst the vines and underneath the olives. The thick shade does not seem to interfere with its growth, for it is now tall and green, its brilliant emerald contrasting well with the sombre stems and light green foliage of its protectors. I suppose that the beneficial shadow from the sun, and the dryness of the climate, which prevents the drip from the trees, allows of this use being made of the ground in plantations, which cannot be done with us.

I am taking some lessons in colouring at present from Signor Boni, a young Milanese artist, only lately established at Nice,

and I have great pleasure in his instructions. He speaks very little French, and indeed I have always an idea that he is attempting one of the dead languages ; and when I try a few words of Italian, he evidently thinks it is Russ, and so we go on in a remarkably taciturn way ; but he *shows* what to do, which is enough ; and I daresay a degree of order will come out of the chaos of language by and bye.

February 26.—We *did* another monastery to-day—that of St Barthélemie. First, we went into a very gaudy church, which a poor, stunted monk was busily engaged in cleaning, a process which it required most peculiarly. He shook his head, and could not speak one word of French. I was not going to be baffled, however, so mustered enough of Italian to beg him to bring somebody who *could* speak French. There was a long interval, only broken by the arrival of a mendicant friar, with a full wallet, just returned from his rounds. At last a burly, red-haired, red-bearded monk made his appearance, and gave me the information that there was a girls' school close to the monastery, and that he would be very happy to show it to me, and, in the meantime, he consented to show us a little of the monastery. He looked very different from the trim monks of Cimiez, and I did not much like the vicinity of the brown cloak and hood, and knotted cord, which all looked as if they had not even been *shaken* for a long time, a ceremony which, in some cases, is only performed twice or thrice in a lifetime. Out

of his girdle, this rather formidable-looking personage drew a large rusty key, which forthwith grated in the keyhole of an old, gloomy, carved door, in a dark, vaulted passage. Then H. and I took fright, and I said, in a pusillanimous sort of way, that we would come back another day. The poor monk looked much puzzled at this instance of feminine caprice, but by this time the door was opened, and a cheerful-looking sacristy was visible through the aperture. On a second examination, too, the monk's face turned out to be very mild and inoffensive, and he was evidently glad of a little variety, so on we went, and very courteous he was, and very grieved when he had to stop our presumptuous footsteps from intruding on the garden, where, in memory of Eve, I suppose, no feminine presence is ever admitted. We were graciously allowed, however, to look at the burying-place, as a safer locality. The monk's "Pardons" were much called for when we were about to penetrate through a small passage and door which he had rashly opened; they led to the altar, and we were speedily recalled to a side aisle, while he drew back a curtain, and showed us a picture, by a Dutchman, he said, and then added, as if he had explained that it was by Brown, Jones, and Robinson, that it was by Rubens! The Frère Mattias—who turned out to be Provençal, from dear old Grasse, which quite established our friendship—then took us to the dirty, dark entrance, and closed door of a dilapidated building, at which he roared, "Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle," but

no mademoiselle appearing, he recalled the melancholy fact that it was "Thursday," which is the continental "Saturday," according to the reckoning of school-boys and school-girls. I am to go back another day, and inquire for the Provençal monk. He shook his head, however, and said that the school was very ill managed, with an expression of regret that I was glad to see. It is superintended by "good ladies" from Nice, as there are no *religieuses* there.

February 28.—To-day I went to see Francesco and Rosa Madiai, who have now found a quiet and comfortable little home at Nice, and a congenial occupation, that of keeping a Bible Depôt, for which all honour to the King of Sardinia! The Madiai are most interesting; very different from each other, so much so that you can scarcely fancy them to be husband and wife. She is a Roman woman, of the finest, most dignified presence, and might be the mother of the Gracchi. Francesco has a look of irresolution and extreme gentleness, and is evidently inferior in intellect, and exceedingly so in manner—hers being one of the most peculiarly aristocratic in its grace and dignity that I ever saw; while his manner is more like his original station in life. Yet I think he interested me as much as Rosa. One felt how much more he must have suffered in his terrible captivity, and how peculiarly strong the power of religion must have been to have made him so steadfast. He *did* suffer much more than his wife, physically and mentally, and came out of prison

with his nerves completely shaken, while the long confinement caused want of circulation in the limbs, which brought on head complaint. The complete unpretendingness and simplicity of both these noble confessors of the truth is very pleasant and beautiful. I showed my appreciation of Francesco in rather a dubious way, for, after shaking hands with him most affectionately, I coolly walked off without paying for the books which I had just bought. He was too gentle and courteous to put me in mind, but luckily I remembered just in time to save my character.

March 2.—To-day I rode as far as a cottage *ornée* belonging to the Marquis de Châteauneuf. The property is called “Le Châtaignier”—not that there are any trees of that sort here, except close to the house, where there is a noble row of them; the others have been cut down, and the hill is wooded principally with pine, between the gnarled stems of which there are framed varied and glorious views. We saw several things worthy of note;—for instance, we met two cows—rather a rarity in these parts—to be sure, they were consumptive and depressed looking, as if they had been sent to Nice for their health, and didn’t like it, but still they *were* cows. Then we met a very smart turn-out—two pony carriages, each with a pair of lovely ponies, and gay with pale silks and velvets, and huge crinolines, and scarlet cashmere mantles, and white lace veils, which would all have looked better in the Corso,

or in Hyde Park, than up there among the wild pines and brambles, and the old hill-tops. Then we saw things prettier and more "in keeping;"—many little children plying their graceful trades of violet bunches and anemones, and rugged pines stretching their quaint old arms in all directions, and in the most fantastic attitudes, and wreathed with the loveliest, freshest sprays and tendrils of young ivy. Then we saw what is of very common occurrence here—a ruined wayside chapel ; the image absent, and no appearance of reverence or worship,—in fact, it is an exception to the rule to find one in good order, and I have never seen one person here or in France engaged in devotion at them. There are many large iron crosses in this neighbourhood, which are different from any that I have seen in France ; but as they are not crucifixes, I do not suppose that they are intended for devotional purposes. They make one shudder, for they are ornamented with a sponge, crown of thorns, ladder, nails, seamless garment, and other memorials of the history they profess to represent. There was only one more sight, and that was a vision of four stout, sturdy, middle-aged men, crouching and kneeling, and lying upon the grass in various picturesque attitudes. I could not think what they were doing ; at last I found that they were engaged in the pretty Arcadian occupation of picking handkerchiefs—full of violets, with the most simple hearty industry. Four Englishmen would have jumped up directly, overwhelmed with *mauvaise honte*, at having forgotten themselves and

their dignity for a moment. I cannot say that the cigars, wide-awakes, and cloth surtouts, were very Arcadian elements in the scene. I am sorry to confess, moreover, that there is an unfortunate and unromantic possibility connected with violets in these parts,—it does not necessarily follow that they are gathered for their beauty, their fragrance, or their tender associations. L. met an old man one day with his pockets full of violets. She asked what he was going to do with them, and he replied that he was going to make violet tea, which was *bon pour l'estomac* after eating too much supper!

LETTER XIV.

MAISON SAUTIRON, *March 3.*—I went to-day to see the girls' school which I told you of. It is close to the Monastery of St. Barthélemie, and is a dirty little hole of a room, with about a dozen untidy children in it; their faces, however, were all clean and rosy, plump and intelligent. There was a baby taken there by its elder sister, and how that baby roared! I really wished that the schoolmistress of your infant-school, where babies *never* roar, could have heard it for the curiosity of the thing. Then when the old schoolmistress was engaged in arguing with the baby, there would be a sudden rush out of the door by two or three rebels, and out she would fly after them, the baby seizing the opportunity to squall and beat the wall more energetically than before. Then the poor mistress would come back in time to deal with a fresh outbreak in a hitherto quiet corner, and then off she would rush again to the remarkable baby. However, there really had been a good deal of teaching

at some time or other, for the girls could read Italian, French, and *patois* very creditably. The Italian writing of one of them was beautiful, and the commencement of another girl's copy-book promised well. Some of them were sewing, and there were signs of arithmetic. The *show-girl* was a remarkably bright-looking creature, who read with great ease, though with a droll sing-song accent. I gave her a copy of the "Sinner's Friend," translated into *patois*, and the schoolmistress gave it a very sharp suspicious look. However, the girl seemed so charmed to get it, evidently looking upon it as a compliment, and a prize for her good reading, that I hope she would keep it and read it. There is a lovely view of Nice from the road just above the monastery, which looks very well in the fore-ground. Still further on there is a beautiful house, called the Villa Arson, belonging to Dr. Arnulfi, a homœopathic doctor, who married one of his patients, the Countess —. The gardens are very fine ; and the gardener has succeeded in producing a blue camellia, which has been one of the fashionable sights among the fashionable world of Nice, especially as the process has been kept a secret ; it is supposed, however, to be effected by the use of iron. The blue camellia was so disobliging as to have tumbled to pieces just before I went to see it, and the buds are not yet sufficiently advanced. There is a fine eagle chained in the vine-walk—an incongruous abode.

I have had a visit from "the Padre Piu," a monk of Cimiez—the real Simon Pure, to whom I had the letter ;

and his cross-looking representative had very ill filled his place, for he is a most agreeable, intelligent man. First, we discussed the weather—then we attacked the Roman antiquities—then the donkey rides and sights of the neighbourhood—then we veered round to education and his own studies, for the Padre Piu is the learned man of the monastery, as well as its great preacher. Just at this juncture the door opened, and some English visitors walked in, who must have thought me *peculiarly* engaged ; however, the monk was not sorry to have the circle of auditors enlarged, for he is not of La Trappe, and so he talked on most fluently and agreeably for some time, then rose, wished me *mille bonheurs*, promised to come back again, and went away. I was beginning to entertain my other visitors, when a double knock saluted my ears. In the way that one sometimes suggests impossibilities, I said to myself, “I hope that is not another monk,” when H. popped in her head, saying, “That’s the begging friar, ma’am, shall I give him something ?” It must really have appeared to my visitors that I was on the high road to Rome, spiritually as well as literally.

“*Baron Munchausen*” is at Nice ! My father met him at a pic-nic the other day, and heard from him the true history of his celebrated namesake. One of his ancestors had a chaplain who was famous for “drawing a long bow”—told in fact the most false and extravagant stories. His patron, the Baron of those days, wrote a book out-Heroding Herod, being a collection of still more marvellous adventures, for the purpose

of shaming the priest ; for which laudable design he was punished, by having his own name held up to posterity as *the story-teller par excellence*.

I have had two excursions with Miss O. within the last few days. One was to the Vallée de Fleurs, or Hepatica Valley as the English call it,—from the prevalence of that pretty blue flower, which is the joy of our spring gardens. In that lovely little valley, and elsewhere, it grows wild in blue carpets, each flower being larger and higher than our cultivated ones. It is a picturesque little spot ; the rocks and trees are draped with ivy, and feathered with lovely ferns.

The other excursion was to St. André—a château and quaint little village, most beautifully situated on a high eminence looking up to Mont Chauve (or Mont Cau in *patois*), the highest of the Maritime Alps in this direction, and down upon Nice and the Mediterranean. It is in such a scene as this that one can subscribe to the admiration expressed by Delille in his *Jardins*, which poem was written at Nice :—

“ Oh, Nice ! heureux séjour—montagnes renommées
De lavande, de thym, de citron parfumée
Que de fois sous tes plants d’oliviers toujours verts,
Dont la pâleur s’unit au sombre azur des mers
J’égaraï mes regards sur ce théâtre immensc.”

Near the château is a beautiful ferny grotto. On our way we passed the Monastery of St. Pons, near the right branch of the stony Paglione. It looks new enough, however, to be

thoroughly uninteresting ; but it is built on the site of a very ancient convent, which flourished in the eighth century, and in which Charlemagne once dwelt for a time on his way to Rome in 777. St. Pons, too, is celebrated for having been the scene of a great assembly of the inhabitants of Nice, when they declared, in 1388, for the House of Savoy, to which they have belonged ever since. Close to St. Pons, on the very top of a high rock, is perched a little ruined chapel, built on the spot where Pontius, or St. Pons, was beheaded. The history of this saint's head is somewhat remarkable, as told by the peasants. It made a great spring from the top of the rock down into the Paglione, from the depths of which immediately arose two hands, not brandishing an "Excali-bar," but two lighted torches, between which the bloody head sailed in triumph down the Paglione to the Mediterranean, and from thence to Marseilles, where it landed itself on a rock, on which another chapel was built in honour of the miraculous voyage.

March 6.—To-day, being tired, I only rode in the direction of the Cimiez convent and amphitheatre. Walking with a lady in the court in front of the convent, I saw a little girl of four or five years of age, dressed all in white —gloves, boots, and all. She had been dedicated to the Virgin, after whom she was also named. It is generally after some wonderful recovery from illness that this is done ; and the children thus dedicated are always entirely

dressed in white for a certain number of years, I suppose till the singularity of costume might become inconvenient.

I encountered four Italian gentlemen, one with a sketch-book, and all exhibiting a delightful and picturesque degree of untidiness and "sweet neglect"—making beautiful bows, and smoking delicious tobacco. One had the comfort of not being quite sure whether they were brigands or not—a doubt one never could have the satisfaction of feeling if one met four stiff, tidy, clean English gentlemen in a donkey-road or convent court, who might not be able even to make a respectable bow! I am very much afraid that you mannerless, soul-less Northlanders will not appreciate the improved manners which visitors to these regions take away with them. If there is such a phrenological bump as the bump of suavity, I am sure that mine must be prodigiously developed. I rather think, however, that if the violet, anemone, and hepatica children knew the old Scotch story, they would say also, "Mair o' your siller, my leddy, and less o' your manners," for I regularly forget my purse ; and one would need to be made of sous to satisfy the claims of juvenile society in these parts.

To say *bon jour* to everybody, is of course an inevitable necessity ; but if you meet everybody a hundred times in each day, the same ceremony must be repeated, ay, and at parting also. It is *bon jour* every time that Marie enters the room, and *bon jour* every time she quits it. It is *bon jour* when I meet her on the stair, and *bon jour* when she

makes the beds. It is *bon jour* when we go out of the front door, and *bon jour* when we come in; and little Françoise contributes her *patois* mite by lisping constantly “*bona sera, Mamsella.*” Next door there is a very large family of *bon jours* and *bon soirs*, relations of Marie’s; and there is a dog and a donkey from whom I shall not be in the least astonished some day to hear *bon jour, bon jour*, barked or brayed.

VILLA BAQUIS, *March 14.*—I came here some days ago to visit Mrs. T., which I am enjoying much; and we have most pleasant mornings and evenings of drawing, working, and reading aloud; it seems home in the midst of an unhome-like land. To-day we went to Villa Franca; a wonderful scene of beauty indeed, though we did not enjoy it fully, owing to the bitterly piercing wind;—the east wind of the “*East Neuk o’ Fife*” may hide its diminished head. The atmosphere was, however, exquisitely clear and bright; and I shall never forget the marvellous succession of views which unfolded themselves to us. On this side, there is Nice, and its castle, and its bay, glittering like fairy land, and reminding one in its perfection of some of those childish mind-pictures of the City which is beyond the river of death, that came to one long ago, after being absorbed in the delightful visions of John Bunyan. One could scarcely quarrel with the French poet, who called this lovely bay, “*La Baie des Anges*,”—even though that French poet added some of

his own poetical verses to *Paradise Lost* ! in which he supposes that Adam and Eve were conducted to Nice after their expulsion from Paradise, by way of a recompense for the beautiful garden they had lost.* This lovely view gleams upon you all the way through olive groves, during an ascent of 450 feet, till at last it bursts on the sight in full beauty from the top of the narrow pass called the Col de Ville Franche, which divides Nice from Villa Franca—then, one step and you have lying just beneath you, on the other side, the lovely, land-locked Bay of Villa Franca, sleeping in the shadow of the mountains, the free, open sea beyond, a strong, fortified castle, and the picturesque little town itself. I do not think that there could be a more beautiful sight. The harbour was once one of great naval importance, but Genoa has drawn away its power and occupation ; and there is scarcely any sign of life in the beautiful bay, except the Russian vessels which brought the Empress and her suite, and a few little white-sailed boats skimming about like sea-gulls. At first we thought that it must be a gala day, for the ships looked gay, with what appeared to be coloured flags hung out in every corner ; but it had only been a washing, on a large scale, of the sailors' clothes, and very pretty they looked.

Another day I went to the top of the castle-hill, from which you look down on the whole of Nice, on the wide

* See a note in *Une Saison à Cannes*, p. 67. M. de Jussieu was the poet's name.

Mediterranean, and the far snowy Alps, even to the Col di Tenda, while, on a clear day, in the morning, Corsica is distinctly visible. The eminence on which the castle stands, is 800 feet high, and there is a winding carriage-drive almost to the top. On every side the most magnificent plants of aloe, and tall cypresses, and masses of rock, and here and there an arch or a doorway of the ruined part of the château, with, perhaps, a single tree standing sentinel over it. The view down upon the strange, old, quaint roofs of the old town beneath us, with every imaginable shape of house, gable, and balcony, delighted me, and I was just rejoicing myself in the nice, dusky hues of the old tiles, stained and tarnished with every variety of colour, and was wishing for the power of Asmodeus, to take them all off for a few minutes, and see what was stirring and struggling, and hoping and fearing beneath, when I heard one of my companions whisper confidently to the other, that nice, clean, slated roofs would be much prettier than those ugly old red ones ! I immediately descended from my altitudes, and began to feel very hungry, so, on our way, we stopped at a large restaurant in the old town, and ordered soup, a large tureen of which, with bread *ad libitum*, we three hungry persons accordingly had, and paid the large price of one franc for the whole ! The town of Nice, which contains 35,000 inhabitants, is not interesting, nor has it any remarkable monuments or public buildings. La Croix de Marbre, which gives its name to a large part of the town, was erected in 1568, in memory of the visit to

Nice of Pope Paul III. in 1538, to promote an interview between Charles V. and Francis I. There is a fine "Promenade des Anglais," and some beautiful boulevards, while there is every variety and size of villas. One of these, the "Maison Rouge," I visited the other day. It belongs to Captain Claridge, the great upholder of the cold-water system, whose enthusiasm on the subject, indeed, is so great that I was quite apprehensive of a douche or a packing, "will ye, nill ye." The garden is large and beautiful, containing every kind of rare shrub, tree, and flower, and the glory of fine scenery surrounds it like a halo.

The hotels at Nice are numerous, and large and tolerably comfortable, and the charges not exorbitant. Here there are carriages, with one and two horses, in stands on the streets, as well as better ones in the *remises*. The street carriages, with one horse, cost two francs an hour—with two horses, two francs and a half; there are also saddle-donkeys in the streets, at a moderate charge. Then there are English libraries, and English newspapers, and English shops—billiard-rooms—good *table-d'hôtes*—plenty of society—quantities of gossip, and a great deal of "dressiness;"—this last being a dubious advantage for invalids who like to go out "anyhow." The shops, both in the old and new town, are generally very good, though the articles are exceedingly expensive.

March 18.—An agreeable and intelligent gentleman, who

called here yesterday, spoke of the many points of resemblance between this place and eastern countries, and I remember hearing a Syrian traveller make the same remark about Cannes and its neighbourhood. There is scarcely a plant mentioned in Scripture which is not found here. The Judas-tree grows and flowers to perfection. The origin of that name, however, is doubtful: some say that it is because it is a native of Judea, others because of the legend that it was on the branches of that species of tree that the traitor hanged himself. The palms here bear dates, which you see hanging in thick clusters, but there is only one tree on which they ripen properly. Then the wells, deep and circular, are of the shape which is so common in the East, and those that one sees in every field and vineyard might be wells of Samaria or Judea. Here, too, we have the sirocco—a point of resemblance which might be dispensed with. For two days there has been a *hot* dry wind, with clouds of fine white sand, which goes by that name, and is very unhealthy.

I have had a visit from a melancholy tailor, in order to put to rights a polka-jacket which he had misfitted. He had to wait a little, and instead of doing so in the hall, he vanished from public view, and was found extended on the green sward, gazing up into the clouds. It was evident that he was so full of sentiment that he could scarcely be at the trouble to fit on the jacket. As soon as he could, he gave utterance to his fervent admiration of the beauties of

scenery, "*mais pas seul.*" He was very dejected indeed because he was "*seul.*" He had travelled in Spain and Italy, but could not enjoy it, because he was "*seul.*" He was never retained long by his employers because he was "*seul.*" He was very tired of being "*seul.*" He would like very much indeed to live in a *campagne comme ça, mais pas seul!* I have melancholy presentiments of the fate of my jacket.

No one can say that education is not cheap in these parts, whatever else is dear. To-day I have seen a schoolmaster who is to come for an hour every day to teach reading and writing to Françoise, the grave, sullen, but clever girl of fifteen, who has been my donkey attendant. How much *do* you think the good old man charges per month? Two francs and a half! He appears at first sight to be in the last stage of decrepitude and old age, and to be falling to pieces, clothes and all; but he turns out an active, energetic, kindly old man, and he stumps up all the way from Nice every day to teach the servants of a French lady next door to us, which I am told he does very well, though certainly he is a most original-looking schoolmaster.

This is my last letter from Nice, for I go back to dear Cannes and "*mine own people*" to-morrow with very great pleasure, though mixed with sorrow at leaving kind friends here. I spent last Sunday evening most delightfully with Sir E. and Lady B; they are frank, cordial, *home-like* people, and I never was in a family circle where I felt so completely and so quickly at home. The S.'s were there, and

we had reading and sacred music, and cheerful conversation,—religion being there, as it ever ought to be, a principle of joy and gladness. All the associations and the pleasant talk about Elizabeth Fry and Earlham, formed an additional delight. I wish you had seen the drawing-room table, it was covered with flower-jars, each crowded with the most gorgeous-coloured wild-flowers, which the children had found among the hills. Tulips, poppies, anemones, scabius, primroses, frog's-mouths, grape-hyacinths, jonquils, and so on, while from the garden there was a glorious scarlet passion-flower, which had stood out all winter, and is now flowering in the open air, in spite of the bitterly cold winds which prevailed for weeks; yet it is so delicate, that in England it can only be reared in very fine hot-houses. Would you like to know the price of orange groves? When the B.'s came to Nice, they bought one for their children to play in, and have plenty of oranges. There are twenty orange-trees, and about 20,000 oranges, and they paid 100 francs, or £4! A lynx was shot behind their villa the other day. By the bye, don't let me forget to tell you—for it is pleasant to excite a little interest among one's friends—that I am going into circumstances of the greatest danger at Cannes. The wolves have come down from the mountains, and carried off Lord Brougham's poultry, almost next door to where I am going to stay; so the probability is, that you will hear of a few of us being dined upon by a hungry wolf, without even the honourable process of French cookery!

LETTER XV.

CHATEAU COURT, *March 20.*—In crossing the Var to come here, two days ago, I could not understand the additional grimness and strictness of the officials on the French side. One short, stout man, indeed, was very civil, and entered on a disquisition upon art! and there was a very handsome gendarme, who was so mollified by the sight of a large balloon ball for Charlie, that I am sure he had little children at home; but all the rest were odious. They tossed everything about with the utmost discourtesy—penetrated to the very bottom of the trunks—examined a small packet of H.'s letters as if they had been political despatches, and were very minute in their inquiries whether we had any new *books*, a thing they had never done before. The best, or the worst of it was, that after all I smuggled a shell-bracelet, and twelve pairs of children's stockings! Most unintentionally, however, for I had quite forgotten them; and the latter parcel was tossing about the carriage

so free and easily, that they never thought of looking at it, though (in the mood they were in) it would have been confiscated had it been discovered, not having been declared. When I got here, I found out the cause of the change at the Var. Miss Marsh, the authoress of the "Memorials of Hedley Vicars," was staying with the Duchess of Gordon the week before last, and went to Nice for a day. On her return, she distributed some little tracts and French prayers at the Var, such things not being supposed to be forbidden; but the officials took it up most hotly, and took away from her not only all the tracts, but some copies of her own book, and her own little French Testament. It is said to have been illegal, for only political tracts are forbidden. Ever since they have been very hard upon poor travellers at the Var.

I hope it is not true, but it is said that even in liberal Piémont they have taken away the Bibles which the Sardinian soldiers were permitted to receive in the Crimea. There is a small town, or rather village, called Eza, about six miles from Nice, which is the head-quarters of Protestantism in the Riviera. One after another of the inhabitants have become Protestant, and they have a peasant missionary who labours among them most devotedly, he himself having been a Roman Catholic. A priest, somewhere in that neighbourhood, was converted, and immediately taken up for heresy; for the old laws of persecution are unrepealed, and there is a strong Roman Catholic party in the Sardinian Government. However, the Liberal party is stronger; and

though they cannot repeal the laws, they can waive their execution, so the priest was acquitted.

You must know that dear little Cannes has not as yet been looking at all itself. Each morning the sky and sea seemed to have had a quarrel, so sullen did they look at each other—not a golden ray in the one, not a smile, or a quiver, or a dimple in the other—both dull, grey, and stolid. To-day, however, the sun came back again, and Cannes was my own Cannes once more. I sat for some time on the hill behind the house, beneath the pine-trees, looking upon as pretty a scene as ever smiled, and listening to many pleasant sounds. Theplash of the little silver waves on the shore—the woodman's axe behind the hill—the newly-awakened music of the little spring-birds, and the tingling of the horses' collar-bells on the distant road, sounding musical so far away. Below, among the orange groves, was going on the pretty picturesque gathering of the orange-flower harvest for the perfumeries—women plucking each separate little flower, and depositing them in fragrant heaps, earlier than usual, for May is the ordinary time; but as the rain has not come in its season, it is feared that it may come afterwards and demolish the poor little orange-flowers. With all these pleasant sights and sounds, came a curious *mélange* of thought and feeling, and ever and always the burden of it was—

“ Hame, hame, hame fain wad I be,
Hame to my ain countrie.”



March 27.—We had a most lovely ride to-day, up to Lady Oxford's villa, which is considerably above the town, and then still farther up among the pine woods, almost to the top of the hill, which belongs to the same property. It is a charming place, and will be more so, for Lady Oxford is carrying on extensive improvements, and has already got a carriage road nearly completed, though with the greatest difficulty ;—before there was nothing but a donkey road. The pines and the undergrowth were so very like a Scotch wood, that one was quite startled by the sight of an occasional olive, ilex, or cork-tree. The view of Cannes from the different points was most beautiful—the Mont Chevalier appearing just between us and the farthest point of the Esterels, which was a new aspect to me of those ever lovely objects. The feeling of home-like affection and admiration which those wonderful Esterels excite in one's mind, I can hardly explain—they *satisfy* one so thoroughly ; indeed, I think that they must have the spirit of a Scotch mountain dwelling within them by mistake !

MAISON PEYRON.—I have come to this pretty villa for a couple of days, to visit Mrs. O. P., a very well-known person in Piémont. She did a great deal of good at Nice, by forming Protestant schools, and carrying them on in the face of great discouragement ; when she left Nice, however, the schools were given up. Mrs. P. is also familiarly known and much beloved among the Vaudois, having lived a great

deal in the Valleys, in constant intercourse with the pastors and people.

Yesterday was a rainy day at last ;—“ Floods upon the thirsty ground.” I remember a piece of poetry beginning with

“ What lady loves a rainy day ?”

and proceeding to set forth that it is only industrious, strong-minded women that “ love a rainy day ;” but here every body goes into raptures at the sight of the blessed rain, which does not come down in drops, but in buckets-full. How the things that are green already grow greener and greener under one’s eyes ! How the things that are not green gush out into verdure ! That garden which yesterday morning was so parched, and brown, and dry, is to-day full of sweet odours and freshest colouring ; and the Esterels seem to take a new beauty in the cleared and freshened atmosphere. Ladies cherish a faint hope that their wrinkles may be smoothed out a bit, that their parched lips may look a little brighter, and that there won’t be so much electricity in their hair and flannel petticoats. The dry winds and hot sun have been very trying, and have injured the crops and affected the health of the French population ; but the rain will put everything to rights.

MAISON REYNAUD, April 7.—I have been settled in these comfortable lodgings for some days. My sitting-room is

papered and furnished with the brightest yellow, which has a peculiar effect upon the complexions of myself and my visitors! At almost all hours of the day, a continued sing-song sort of muttering may be heard from the little entrance lobby, or sometimes from the commencement of the stair; there is a pleasing variety of tone occasionally, but the burden of the melody seems always the same. It proceeds from a succession of beggars, who take up their station and their song in hopes of melting some of the hearts in the three flats! They are not always contented with such a lowly position, however. One day my sitting-room door bounced open, and in flew a very well-dressed little girl, but with the ugliest, dirtiest face I ever saw. She said, in the most authoritative manner, "Mon papa demande quelque chose." I naturally inquired who "son papa" could possibly be? and she jabbered something about "La musique de mon papa," which recalled to my recollection a certain scraping, squeaking noise which had been going on for a long time that morning. She vanished, apparently quite satisfied with her successful levy of "black mail," in the shape of two sous. We have other sounds than these. I have been greatly puzzled by a strange noise which I have often heard lately; it takes every possible variety and locality of sound. Perhaps you think it is something in your ears, and shake your head ruefully—no, it is not there; or you think it is a kettle singing furiously, but there is not a kettle to sing, so it can't be that; well, then, it must be the

lamp that has gone wrong, but the lamp indignantly repels the accusation by burning more brightly and steadily than before. Sometimes it seems to come down the chimney ; sometimes it seems to be in that corner of the room, sometimes in the other ; sometimes to be at the window, sometimes close to your ear, sometimes a mile off. Sometimes it is so like a "caw, caw," that I have fancied myself in the the dear old rookery at W., before the Goths and Vandals invaded it. At other times it is like cats, or babies, or donkeys, or peacocks, or any unmusical sound your imagination can supply ; and very frequently it is like the ringing of small bells. All these various noises proceed from a colony of frogs very near the house ; and the variety of tone is not so much owing to the different kinds, as to their different ages and dispositions. There are beautiful little green frogs found here, but I do not know what part in the concert they take—they are not very common ; of course their beauty consists in colouring, not in countenance or gait. It is only at first that one can trace any resemblance between frog and rook concerts ; there is a sad want of mind and music in the the sweet discourses of the former, and one never would imagine that the frogs were having a tea-party, a funeral or a meeting of parliament like the good old rooks.

The more I see of the walks or rides near this, the more I am struck by their Scotchness. I took a walk the other night in a little valley of pines and rocks and heather, which

might have been a Highland dell any day. Yes! we have heather and broom here, but the heather is not quite that of bonnie Scotland. It is a tall bushy shrub, with large branches, covered thick with the tiniest little white bells, lined with black velvet, and giving out a rich, heavy odour which some people cannot bear in a room, though it is delicious out of doors. Neither is the broom "the broom of the Cowdenknowes,"—neither so golden nor so beautiful, though it bears a sufficient resemblance to tantalize homesick eyes. Some rather peculiar inhabitants of this picturesque valley were decidedly *not* Scotch, but cousins-german of Madame Tussaud. The propriétaire, wishing to have some one to whom he can say "How sweet is solitude," without the trouble of a reply, has stationed gaily-dressed figures the size of life, wooden, I suppose, in the most conspicuous position. See! there is a very smart gentleman in a bright blue coat and top-boots and cocked hat, waving a drawn sword over the pines; while another, still more gaily clad, ruralizes in that clump of trees; and another, in a somewhat Eastern-looking garb, keeps guard at the topmost *point de vue*. How odd and incongruous they do look, just when one was beginning to fancy one's-self in Scotland too! At the entrance of the valley of the figures, there are two curious large deep wells, cut out of the solid rock about fifty years ago, with pretty trees drooping over them.

April 20.—The heat is intense; from eight in the

morning till six in the evening it is almost dangerous to move out—the heat and power of the sun is so intense. A short walk in the sun, even with every protection of umbrella and veil, makes one feel quite dizzy, and then, after coming in, an attack of cold and shivering often follows the feverish heat. But then the evenings are charming, for the summer sultriness has not yet commenced, and there is still the freshness of spring, after the sun has lowered his rays; and if one is wise, and stays in the house till a safe hour, there need be no suffering from heat, for with the windows open and the *persiennes* shut, the rooms are deliciously cool. Some parts of the country, removed from the sea, are exceedingly injured by the intense heat of summer. There are also some parts where the cold is as great in winter as the summer is hot. There is a statement to the effect that the heat of the whole department is equal to that of Barbadoes, but it can only be to the *feeling*, for the average heat in July and August 1856, at Draguignan (chief town of the Var), was at mid-day only 82°, and at ten P.M. 75°. Just now, too, when sometimes gasping with heat, it is quite surprising to find how low the thermometer stands.

The walks on this side of Cannes are much prettier than on the other. There are glens, and dells, and woodland paths, that combine the beauties of the Highlands and the Lowlands; and the clearness, and purity, and balminess of the evening atmosphere, are more than I can describe. I

have no doubt that you are now shivering in the midst of east winds, and heats, and rains, and all sorts of horrors, and therefore look upon us, and these descriptions of hot days and summer evenings, with considerable envy. But you need not do so, I assure you ; there are many drawbacks—and none so great as the great changeableness. One day we may be broiled under a Bengal sun—the next pierced by a mistral, or an east wind, which seems rather "*Fifish*" in its eccentric bitterness. The truth is, that I think "climate" is what Carlyle would call a "great sham." I don't believe in "good climate" myself, except in the land

"Of spring, whose warblers no winter shall dread,
Of flowers ne'er braided to die o'er the dead."

In this world we must always have too much sun, or too little sun, or mistral, or damp, or cold, or all put together, so that after all, "contentment," whether we go abroad or stay at home, is the greatest "gain" with regard to climate, as well as anything else. Having given you this splendid truism, I shall add a few remarks on the climate of Provence, which I owe to wiser heads than mine. For any comprehensive details, however, I must refer you to specific works ; for the subject of climate, apparently so simple, is in reality very complex. So much more enters into the question than belongs to mere atmospheric variation, that one winter's abode can afford to any one but partial opportunities of knowing what a climate really is.

For a considerable time after arriving at Cannes, everybody seems highly delighted, and nothing is heard but praises of its wonderful climate ;—but whether these pleasurable feelings be owing to the unmixed influences of climate, or to the combined effects of novelty, change of air, and beautiful and cheerful scenery, is not quite clear to my mind. It is not, however, till March begins to make its approach, that little misgivings are heard with regard to its perfection. Then it is discovered that cold winds can find their way round the extremities of Alpine ranges, and having long felt the influence of snowy regions, vent their sharpened feelings on the spoiled nurslings of their sheltered Mediterranean nooks. The mistral of which so much has been said, as the worst of Provençal winds, is really not so bad—its “bark is worse than its bite ;” and though its approach is rather rude and uncouth, if it be met bravely with a warmer shawl and thicker coat, it may be considered as rather a pleasant acquaintance than otherwise ; although it can boast of the significant *patois* name of “*Maetro.*”

It is said that it was unknown in Provence in the days of Julius Cæsar, which is, however, no comfort at all ; and Dr. Edwin Lee, in his book upon climate, accounts for this fact, if fact it be, in this manner. In those days the country was covered with forests. When they were cut down, the barren mountain tops and stony plains became heated by the sun ; the air is heated also, and rises dilated into the higher regions ; then the colder, heavier air above

the snowy mountains precipitates itself like a torrent to fill up the void which has been occasioned by the lower stratum of air, and hence the ravings and thunder-claps of the mistral. This season the east wind has been more prevalent than the mistral; it generally brings rain with it, but having failed to do so, its duration has been more trying to the constitution, from the long continued dryness.

The fact is, that the climate of Cannes is due to its sheltered position, and not to the latitude it lies under. Leaving the bleak regions of Provence proper, you cross the rugged Esterels, and drop into an alcove of perpetual verdure, lulled with the placid waters of a tideless bay. Closed in on all sides, save from the east to the south-west, by a succession of crags, mounds, hills, and hill ranges of crumbling granite, gneiss, and porphyry, rent and uplifted in varied and abrupt exposure, without morass, lake, or running stream, it is a patch of country which scarcely seems to belong to our colder Europe, and except during its invasion by mistral and bise, might belong to tropical regions.

The thermometer does descend, however, as I have told you before, at Cannes, as elsewhere, when Christmas draws near, and snow sometimes comes down to claim the compliments of the season. It is a proof, however, how light the tribute is, that even after frost and snow, the precious aroma of heat-loving plants is still available. Not only the soil,

but the sub-stratum of the district is dry, and the warm rays of the sun which range very high in the cloudless sky, are readily absorbed and retained by the rocks. Now, I fancy that it is this heat-absorbing and retaining nature of the soil which enables those heat-loving exotics to bear the variations from extreme heat to extreme cold, which are common here, their roots being thus kept safe and warm. A military officer, who has been much in the West Indies and elsewhere, says that he has scarcely ever been in a place where the *medium temperature* is so equable, or takes less range than here; but the extremes of temperature, as the days when there is no sun, and the next, when he pours forth his brilliant rays, is something incredibly great. A description of New Year's day of this year affords an illustration. Ice on the ground at sun-rise, the direct rays of the sun at mid-day 100°, bright, clear day without wind, air from the north. Again, on the 2d—cloudless day, no wind, sun's rays 104°, air from south-west by west. In this same month of January, there were sixteen days in which an invalid might enjoy a temperature out of doors, ranging from 77° to 90° and 100°, and by selecting places sheltered from the currents of air, do so without risk. Now, to show how difficult it is to convey an impression as to the nature of a climate by statistical figures, on the 7th of April we had bright, clear air from the west, and the thermometer rising no higher than 89°, although standing at 49° in the morning. While in the very hot weather, of which almost everybody complains, and none

more loudly than those who have been in India, the sun's direct influence raises the thermometer only from 88° to 90°, the medium lowest temperature being 60°.

I read the other day, that the climate of Provence has become decidedly colder within the last fifty years; and in proof of this it was stated, that the culture of oranges on a large scale, which used to be universal, is now restricted to a few favoured spots, principally near the sea.

As a significant element in the winter climate of this place, it is interesting to note the sea's temperature, which is many degrees above that of the air throughout the whole *winter*, which is nominally from November till March—during that time this year, there has only been a range of ten degrees. Gradually declining, in proportion, it is supposed, as the snow-water descended from the distant heights, it reached its lowest degree of 55° to 56° about the middle of December, remaining invariable until the end of March, when it began to rise, and by the middle of May will be steadily what it was in the middle of November, 65° to 66°. We have thus, during the whole cool season, a vast expanse of water giving off from 15° to 20° of heat. Dr. Whately* says, that in leaning over the harbour to take the temperature of the sea, you can distinctly feel the sensation of warmth.

The nights, or rather early mornings, are still cold, and will continue to be so for some time; the intensely clear

* It is from Dr. Whately that I have received most of these remarks upon climate.

firmament allowing of a very rapid escape of heat by radiation. It is thus that the late shoots of the orange, still tender from the lingering warmth of autumn, are often, as the natives expressively tell you, “burnt with the cold.”

With regard to rain, Lord Brougham thinks that about as much rain falls in this country as the average quantity in England, only it is compressed into a much shorter period. He has known five inches of rain fall in twenty-four hours ; and indeed our rainy days at home give us little idea of the *sheets* of rain which fall here. He believes that rain falls about forty or forty-five days in the year, and that in those days about twenty-eight inches fall. It is said that the average for the whole department of the Var is thirty-five days of rain a year, that of the next department is fifty-four, while only twenty-two inches fall in the year in both districts, but that, I believe, is within the mark.

There is a curious difference in the soil and climate of the two sides of Cannes ;—the west, towards Napoule and the Esterels, is almost entirely granitic—the eastern side, towards Nice, is calcareous. Towards the west, therefore, you have a much more barren and parched country. The soil is excessively dry, and an hour or two after the heaviest rain, presents no appearance of moisture ; the cold is greater in winter, and the heat more intense in summer. The dryness renders it, of course, much more suitable for some constitutions, while it is only on this granitic soil that the delicate cassia can be cultivated. On the other side it

is quite different—there is much more damp ; so much so that I have heard of pedestrians quitting one side with dust on their shoes, and sighing for goloshes by the time they reached their destination on the other ! The crops are more luxuriant, the gardens more thriving, the air softer and less exciting, though more depressing, and the olives in full beauty, though the orange, the cassia, and the geranium love it not. This year there is a good deal of fever in Cannes and its vicinity. One hears the death-bell toll too frequently at present; but it is more free from epidemics in general than the neighbouring towns, and even now the deaths are few in proportion to the inhabitants. It is said that the reason of this prevalence of fever is, that a marsh at the Croisette is being dug up, and its odours disturbed into fresh activity, while the wind, having been much from the east, has conveyed the miasma directly into Cannes.

We are well off for medical men here. There are three French ones, a German homœopathic doctor, who stands high in his system, and is much employed by those who prefer innocent globules and bits of sugar to boluses and black draughts. Till this winter there has been no English doctor, but now Dr. Whately is settled at Cannes, and gives very great satisfaction to his patients, by his care and attention,—while his treatment of some difficult cases has established confidence in his skill.

This house is the last house of Cannes on the east side, and all the funerals from the country stop just at our door, to

await the arrival of the priests from the town. One was the funeral of a young girl, who had died of the fever, and was accompanied only by women. The coffin was covered with white, and decorated with flowers, while four young girls, dressed entirely in white, carried a white pall, ornamented with green leaves ; the rest of the women were in colours as usual, but wore white caps, and Sunday kerchiefs. The cortège from the town did not come for a long time, so that the coffin and the mourners remained under our windows for at least an hour, and a curious sight it was—a solemn and a mournful sight—and all the more so, because there was not a trace of solemnity or of grief. There was not one silent mourner,—not one bowed head,—not one tearful eye. Everybody talked and smiled, and examined the flowers, and the texture of the pall ; and, though the words were inaudible, one knew full well that it was only the beauty of the decorations, and the price of the linen, and the symptoms of the dead girl, and a few morsels of gossip, over and above, which were being discussed so lightly and pleasantly. The poor mother and another sister were dying at home ! At last there came the faint sounds of the chanted requiem, always so wild and thrilling, and it came nearer, and then we saw the little choristers, and the priest, and the crucifix, and the lighted candles flickering in the wind, and one or two officials in red, who cleared the way. The priest stood beside the white coffin, and reared the crucifix high, and said a few words, and there was no more sound of tongues, but all heads

were bowed, and then the whole procession took its way to the burying-ground. Soon dust would sleep with dust, and, perchance, the spirit would look down the while, wondering and sorrowing that death, the "tremendous necessity," had come amongst its kindred, and passed by again, without leaving other sign, or working deeper work, than an empty chair, and a filled-up grave.

LETTER X VI.

MAISON REYNAUD, *April 22.*—I am going to take you a walk to La Croisette, that long narrow promontory which shoots out towards the islands, about two miles to the east of Cannes. From a distance it looks something like the tongue of an ant-eater, but we shall find it gradually widen as we approach it. Along the sands we must go, I think, not because of the pleasantness of the walk, for the sand is very soft and heavy, and not sensible of its duties and responsibilities as belonging to such a charming place as Cannes ; but the views are so lovely from the beach, that we shall be fully repaid. We come first to this wild desolate little group of rocks, amongst which there is such a ceaseless splashing and surging of the restless wavelets. This is about the place where commence the various inelegant attitudes of shell-gatherers. Look ! there are a great many parti-coloured heaps on the ground—those are a mamma and a nurserymaid, and a number of little children, all hunting for shells. There is a grave married couple taking

their daily "constitutional;"—suddenly, one or the other, or both, disappear from sight,—they have pounced upon a new shell ! That thing, too, that looks like a four-footed animal escaped from a menagerie is also a shell-collector. I wonder how backs and heads can support the trials of this branch of science. But even for those unscientific individuals, who, like myself, walk erect, there is a great deal of beauty and interest on the beach of the Croisette. That large tropical-looking shell, which is probably a visitor from African shores, can be seen without stooping ; so can these strange hairy balls and cones, which are so thickly strewn on the sand ; however, I think that it will be as well to unbend a little and pick up one or two of them, in order to make quite sure of what they are. There appear to be two distinct kinds—one is quite round, and composed of nothing but what seems to be dried hair or cocoa-nut fibres interlaced into a ball. The other is in the shape of a cone, of which one end is dried and fibre-like also ; but there is more moisture and greenness towards the other end, where there is still a sort of calyx or case left on some of them, and others have portions of stalks, and greenish brown leaves. Perhaps it is these leaves fallen off and quite sere, which we see carpeting the ground here in such quantities. What can these strange things be ? Fir cones or sea-weed, or the wigs of water-kelpies and mermaids ? Nobody that I ask can give me the least information, and I do not know of any naturalist in this neighbourhood to whom we can apply. Here, too, we

may see lovely little bits of coral, red and white ; but not so plentiful as on the shores of the Lérins, where you may pick up enough for a bracelet.

There is room on the broader part of the Croisette for two houses and a garden, a shrubbery, and a pine-wood ; then comes the marsh, which they are busily draining at this present time, and where, it is said, there is to be a little village built, but that may only be Cannes' gossip. The farthest point of La Croisette gives signs of more warlike presence in old time than sea-weed and corals. There are the ruins of a fort erected by the command of Richelieu, which withstood the Spaniards when they were masters of the islands in 1635. There is also a round tower, once part of the same fortifications, but from its exposure to the strong seas, which have almost undermined it, it has a much more ancient appearance. Did you ever see a finer view than this that we are gazing on ? Close to us, on the opposite shore, is Ste. Marguerite and her fortress—the Esterels, and Cannes behind ; and around us, this desolate point of land, and the ruined fort, and the round tower, and the wild waves lashing and dashing up at our feet. It is very wild and isolated, which adds to the charm. La Croisette takes its name from a cross which was reared in the middle of the pines ; many companies of peasants went thither from Cannes in former times, but there is scarcely a trace of it left now.

Let us now retrace our steps to Cannes, which we have never yet thoroughly explored. Entering from the east

sands, we soon reach the *Cours* or *Marine*; at once the fashionable lounge, the market, and the boat-stand. Quite lately there have been signs of progress here—some ugly old buildings have been cleared away this winter, and a handsome *Cercle* is being erected on the spot. Look, too, at this new plantation, consisting of twenty-four young palm-trees, which some day, when our eyes cannot see, nor our feet tread the ground, will form a beautiful oriental walk and shelter, for the babes of to-day, grown into men and women. Not far from the palms there is a very gay booth, with plenty of crimson paper about it—that is a stationery shop, where you may get your initials stamped upon paper in approved modern fashion: behind it there is a still gayer stall, hung with bright scarfs and shawls of all colours. The orange and apple stall under the large tree, with its huge umbrella, and its round-faced old woman, and the vegetable woman, resembling a scarecrow, who brings her broken chair from the next tree, and gossips with the oranges and apples, are altogether charming. So are those pretty “creels,” with their pretty burdens of tiny silvery fish—fresh anchovies and sardines they are, and red mullet and mackerel, and a fish they call St. Pierre, which is esteemed the “ortolan of the sea.” There is an old Provençal dish, of which good King René doubtless often partook, which is still valued here—*bouille-à-baisse*; it is compounded of all sorts of fish, oil, onions, garlic, spices, and pieces of bread. I think we will not look at the butcher’s table, which is never an attractive sight,—not even

at the microscopic lambs, or kids as some people say they are, though I don't believe it. You see, however, that it is not only out-of-door shops, of which we are possessed, for opposite the market and the trees there is a long line of house shops of all imaginable kinds, and a fashionable draper and confectioner, with large windows, have lately arrived to increase the number.

Let us now look at the Hôtel de Ville, which is opposite the Cours, and which is not very different from the other houses, except that it has a branch of a palm carved in stone over the door. To tell the truth, I took it for the portrait of a pen for a long time, but that was a mistake, and I will tell you the history of that palm, and how it came there. Once upon a time, during a bombardment of Toulon, a rich merchant of Cannes, who dealt in salted anchovies, made his way among the fleet with his little fishing-boats, laden with corn, and relieved the town. He received "lettres de noblesse," and Cannes was rewarded for being his birthplace, with permission to have a palm branch and fleur-de-lis carved over the door of its Hôtel de Ville. In 1830, the fleur-de-lis was taken away, but the palm still remains.

During the days of "The Terror" there was a wonderful exemption from bloodshed at Cannes, not one murder soiled its streets, and the only risings of the populace were when they interfered to save some victims from the fury of the soldiers. Upon one of these occasions, the priests were hidden in the Hôtel de Ville: a battalion of soldiers wished to massacre

them, but a host of indignant Cannards were at the door. “Voila,” said the municipal agent to the commander of the troops, “il n’y en a pas deux seulement à tuer ; voyez combien de têtes il faut abattre, pour parvenir jusqu’à eux.” The priests were saved. At that time Cannes, on account of its freedom from the neighbouring horrors, merited and received the beautiful surname of “Cannes sans tache.”*

But what immense crowd is this which we encounter in the whilom quiet street ? From the top of the highest house a strong rope extends down to the Marine, where it is fastened in the ground. All eyes are looking up to the balcony at the top of the house. Whenever I pass it is the same thing —the rope, the crowd, the uplifted eyes, but nothing else ; however, they say that a man walks up and down that fearful path : it ought to be forbidden by the authorities.† As we were passing, D. told me that he once saw in India, a rope about half a mile long, stretching from the top of a high hill to the plain below. A devotee, after tossing a goat in sacrifice off the top of the rock, mounted on a kind of saddle, with a hole through which the rope ran : his legs were well weighted to keep him on his seat. He then set off at a furious pace, waving both arms to keep his balance ; and on arriving at the end of the rope, the sudden check broke both his thigh bones, and he was carried in triumph from house to house to

* See *Visite aux Iles de Lérins.* Par l’Abbé L’Alliez.

† I hear that a short time afterwards this man fell and was killed while exhibiting at Draguignan.

receive the alms which he was supposed to have merited by his religious exploit.

Another exhibition is going on in Cannes. See ! there is the stage also erected on the Marine. It belongs to a company of strolling players, who generally act pantomimes and farces ; but (I scarcely like to tell it) they have twice performed the most blasphemous and revolting representation of the crucifixion—not omitting any particulars of it—and acted by the heroes and heroines of the preceding entertainments. Is it not dreadful how such things can be allowed ? From the Marine let us go down to the port, with its pretty white lighthouse, and its innumerable little fishing-boats, with their white, or yellow, or burnt-umber sails, and the red-capped, red-scarfed sailors and fishermen, and the long curved Mediterranean sail, which is so peculiarly novel and picturesque. The port was constructed in 1836, at the instance of Lord Brougham, to whom Cannes owes so much of its prosperity ; and, since its erection, the commerce of Cannes has flourished in a surprising manner. It is now the third port of exportation in the French part of the Mediterranean, the only two superior to it being Marseilles and Clette. Oil, perfumes, corks, anchovies, and sardines, are the principal sources of its revenue, which is rapidly increasing. Lord Brougham told me that the anchovies of Cannes are so famous, that it has become a common practice to forge the Cannes mark upon barrels of anchovies from other places, and he was seriously requested some years ago to use his

influence with his friend the Duc de Broglie, then in power, to have this particular forgery made a capital offence.

The old village of Cannes was confined to the Mont Chevalier, and to Suquet, a hilly quarter, which still possesses nice old gables, arches, and doorways. Of course, houses could not be built on the plain without some good legendary reason ; and, accordingly, one day when a fair young shepherdess was watching her flocks in some meadows by the sea, a beautiful lady in white, with a brilliant halo round her head, appeared to her, and after praising her industry and modesty, sent her to tell the inhabitants of the village on the hill that from that time they might establish themselves in the plain, where she would be their protectress. They did so, and Notre Dame d'Espérance became the patron lady along with St. Nicholas. Still, some incredulous people did not believe the vision, and remained on the mount. However, a time of war came, and their houses were destroyed, and they, too, came down to the new town. Cannes, however, is much more ancient than those days of shepherdesses and visions. It is supposed to have been the *Ægitna* of the ancients, where some Romans having been murdered, an army was sent against it, and it was razed to the ground. The situation was too beautiful to remain without inhabitants. Towards the middle of the tenth century, we have the village as rebuilt under the name of *Castrum Marcellinum* (*Château Marcellin*), conjectured to be so called from the relics of a martyr of that name, which were taken there from Africa. In 1132, a

Count of Provence named it *Castrum Francum*, or *Château Franc*, because he granted it an exemption from taxes.

Its present name, most people believe, is owing to the long reeds or “*cannes*,” which are found in great abundance, and which have a very striking appearance ; they are much used for supporting the vines, and single canes you find in cottages and kitchens and outhouses, for the purpose of lifting things down from a height. After noticing this, I was more struck than before by the passage in the Sacred History, in which the “reed,” or, as it is in the Italian Testament, “*la canna*,” is spoken of as raising to the Cross the sponge of vinegar. It is wonderful the new interest and reality which a commonplace but vivid association can sometimes give to words long familiarly known.

Pope Pius VII. and Murat, the ex-king of Naples, two very different personages, have honoured Cannes with their presence. The latter saved the town from being pillaged by a regiment of soldiers, and must have been altogether a popular person, for he assisted at the dance which took place near the inn where he lodged ; and upon one occasion, when a lady dropped her ring, and everybody, Murat included, had looked for it in vain, he approached the lady, saying :— “*Madame, j'ai trouvé la bague, la voici !*” and presented her with a ring of brilliants, which he had drawn from his own finger.

April 23.—D. and I went to Vallauris, a little town about

three miles from Cannes ; at least, we went to the point from whence it is seen, from the top of the hill at the Chapelle de St. Antoine, in its own lovely valley underneath the snowy Alps. The town itself is not worth visiting, so we did not go down to it, but contented ourselves with the view, which is certainly superb, and the varied forms of the mountains are very striking. The snowy Alpine range behind, peaked and ridged and serried ; nearer to us, some strange-shaped mountains, with Grecian foreheads and noses, and their steep slopes quite *Petra*-looking in the distance, with what must be, I suppose, holes and shadows bearing the exact resemblance to tombs or dwelling-places cut in the rock. At the foot of one of them something white glitters far, far away—that is a little village ; then come a much nearer range of pine and olive hills, beneath which nestle the white houses, tower and church of Vallauris itself ; fortunately, these French villages are always snowy outside, even though the houses and the people may be none of the snowiest. In one corner of the landscape there is something very blue indeed, and what can that be but the Mediterranean ! On the way to St. Antoine, we passed a little chapel, within which was a votive offering of some herbs stuck in two very smart-looking receptacles, which on closer inspection turned out to be two mustard-pots with the advertisements of the vendors of “moutarde et vinaigre” still pasted on them ! Our road to-day was a happy specimen of the genuine old French road, consisting of broken stone stairs, with masses of stones thrown

here and there for the express purpose of laming for life every quadruped and biped rash enough to attempt the ascent.

We have also been to Mougins, a small picturesque town about six miles from this, perched on the top of a hill, from whence there is a glorious view of the Alps and Nice. In these countries one constantly meets with the scriptural illustration of the Christian character—for almost every village, and part of every town is “set on a hill, and cannot be hid.” A new set of plants have come out; the wild arum, with its large flower and leaf, said to be deadly poison, and used by the Indians for their deadly arrows; the wild gladiolus, purple and very handsome; the lovely “rock rose,” or “rose of Sharon;” a white cistus, and the yellow cistus; but one misses the gorgeous **scarlet**, or “*soleil*” anemones, which we had once, and those **lovely** striped crimson and white wild tulips. You must dismiss from your mind all idea of flaunting things such as we have in our gardens; these are the most graceful, delicate little things possible, with a faint but sweet perfume; and when they as well as the exquisite flowers of the almond and the peach fell off and withered, it was as if friends had passed from us. We, however, have a constant succession of floral beauties here.

Last night I had a “promenade” on the queerest, *littlest*, black donkey, that ever chivalrous mortal dared to ride. When it first came to the door, our French landlord, who was standing by, said, with much politeness and gravity, that

if any accident happened, Mademoiselle could put the donkey into her pocket! I believe that I and my crinoline completely extinguished him from public view, which must have been trying to a donkey's feelings. The woman appertaining to this new quadruped is very amusing; to whatever you say, even if it is not a very startling or remarkable announcement, she replies, "Possible," with precisely the intonation of Dominie Sampson's "prodigious." I had some sketching last night by the wayside; it is so amusing to sketch the women and old bodies that one meets, and they always take it as a great compliment, and sit as properly and as composed as if they had done nothing else all their lives. We met such a nice merry little woman belonging to the Col di Tenda, "Marie" by name, dressed in the gay colours of the Briga costume: she was charmed to be sketched, only she was deeply mortified that she had not on her Sunday apparel, the particulars of which she proceeded to describe with the most amusing gravity and regretfulness. I have often noticed among the natives here a strong eye for the picturesque, and admiration of the beauties of their own lovely land, which is most pleasing, and which *ought* to be elevating. One evening, last winter, I remember Annette pointed out to me a beautiful sunset behind the Esterels, and said, "Cela fera pour votre camerade," having seen and highly appreciated C.'s drawings a few days before. Shortly after, she brought me a piece of paper folded into a little square parcel, and opening this with the greatest care, exhibited to

me a drawing she had made of the palm-tree in front of her own door—and really one could not mistake it for anything else. There were various other objects which Annette thought it necessary to specify, in case of blunders on my part—this was a pig-house, and that was a bush, and those were two chimney-pots, which I confess I had taken for a couple of children, and so on. A sudden ambition to equal C. had possessed her as she was leaving her mother's house one morning, and she rushed up stairs again to wield pencil and paper, the result of which I shall always keep, in memory of Annette.

I have been spending the day with Mrs. G. She is a beautiful singer, and has two musical friends staying with her; and as I sat there in that French château listening to "Consider the Lilies," and "Remember now thy Creator," and Mendelssohn, and Beethoven, especially the "Moonlight Sonata," and looking through the open windows at the blue sea, and the deep golden sunshine, I felt in a dream-like state of enjoyment. Surely there is truth in what old Sir Thomas Browne says of music:—"There is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers. It is a hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God; such a melody to the ear as the whole world well understood would afford the understanding."*

I don't think I told you of the curious visitor we had in the Scotch Church one Sunday lately. In the middle of the

* Quoted in *Friends in Council*.

service a whispering arose—heads were turned in the wrong direction—ladies' dresses were gathered together with great trepidation: it was clear something had gone wrong. One heard at last the mysterious words, “*It* has walked out!” and various visions of sheeted ghosts, and nodding “ravens” and “pallid busts of Pallas,” came before me. At the close of the service there was a rush to the door, and “here *It* is,” again met my ear. To all appearance the *it* was really worse than any of the aforesaid imaginations, being, as the coachman at the door said, with every sign of fear and disgust, a scorpion of the most venomous kind, bearing the ominous name of “*diable*.” It was a hideous little creature, about four inches long, with an immense head, and the wickedest expression of eye that I ever saw. Upon the strength of the coachman’s assertion, we thought it no harm, especially in the cause of science, to imprison him in a tumbler, where his wrath and hatred were really “no canny” to behold,—and then to kill him with spirits of wine. After the murder, we heard to our regret that the poor little thing was only mischievous to crops, which he and his tribe destroy with the most marvellous rapidity, burrowing in the earth, and devouring the seeds and roots under ground.

LETTER XVII.

MAISON REYNAUD, *May 5.*—To-day, Mr. E. and his wife, a lively and intelligent French lady, took me to a tower, which he has built on an elevated piece of ground on the Antibes road, about six miles from this. It is in the process of being converted into a small summer residence, and from the top there is a view that I was going to say I never saw equalled, but then one is tempted to say that so constantly in this glorious land—each new one seeming the best. However, I think this view really deserves the palm. Antibes just below, with its Roman towers, and modern fortifications, and strong city wall,—jutting out into the sea, on a little promontory, the Fort Carré, with its strange oblique lines,—the harbour of Antibes,—the pretty light arcades of its pier,—the lighthouse, occupying a most commanding position on the top of a hill which forms part of the promontory of La Garoupe,—opposite to Antibes, the town of Nice, glancing in its brightness far away,—behind it the Italian Alps, Monte

Calvo being the most conspicuous. How pure, how lofty, how unearthly those snowy peaks show themselves to one's heart and eyes, especially when contrasted, as to-day, with the glowing brilliancy of an almost tropical noonday ! How they send one yearning after things that one cannot grasp *yet*—eternal mountains, that are only to be seen in “ the land that is very far off ! ” Sweeping down to the water's edge, on the left hand, just underneath the snowy hills, there is the picturesque town of Cagne—another “ city set on a hill ; ” then, turning in the direction of Cannes, you have all familiar objects once more—the Esterels, the Lérins, La Croisette, and olive-yards, as usual, gleaming in their moonlight colouring between. I had often travelled the Antibes road before, which is likewise the road to Nice, but generally in a hurry, and with a view to some ulterior object, but this quiet, leisurely drive I enjoyed exceedingly, and saw new beauties at every step. There are three gulfs, which are rivals in beauty—the Golfe de Napoule, close to the Esterels, which I described to you before, and which I admire most ; the Golfe de Juan, which lies between the lighthouse promontory of Antibes, and the promontory of La Croisette, and along the edge of which our road lay ; while the third is the Golfe de Nice, of a more ambitious order of beauty. The Golfe de Juan is the wildest and sternest of the three. After leaving Cannes and its immediate vicinity, the road is fringed by strange, gnarled pines, and down below are huge boulders of rock, amongst which the sea surges or smiles, as

the case may be, and the sea-gulls chatter and caw. On the other side of the road, there are the wild, stunted pines of the forest of Ste. Marguerite, and not a trace of cultivated vegetation, while far out there is a solitary speck—a rocky islet about sixty feet long, which is to be sold—and I am afraid one may live to see “To be let” painted in large letters on it, if the present rage continues for marine villas. Soon the landscape becomes *riante* again, and it is said to resemble some parts of the Riviera;—there are a few determined Cannites who think it not at all inferior.

The greatest object of interest on this road is a small way-side inn, which claims the honour of having received Napoleon on his return from Elba. It bears this inscription, in large letters,—“Venez, passants, et célèbrez son nom ; c'est ici que se repose le grand Napoléon.” In a world where “progression by antagonism” seems the leading principle, there is, of course, an “opposition” resting-place just opposite. That on the right-hand side coming from Antibes to Cannes, is the most authentic, or, I should say, the least recent, for neither one nor the other ever received the hero. They have both been erected within a few years. He found a more fitting shelter under the Provençal olives and the blue southern vault. Napoleon landed from Elba on the 1st of March 1815, on the shore of the Gulf of Juan, which event is commemorated by the inscription of the date on a column by the roadside near the little inn, and close to the place of debarkation. What a wonderful hold that dead

man, that dethroned monarch retains over one's imagination ! Great as this Emperor undoubtedly is, as far as boldness and forethought and success can make a great man, and with almost as romantic and unexpected a career, he and his history never wake one throb either of the love, or fear, or wonder, which somehow mix strangely with the knowledge of his crimes, in one's thoughts of that first Napoleon. The idea that many entertain of his being mentioned in the Apocalypse, tends to increase the wonder and the awe. This is alluded to in a poem upon Madame Letitia Buonaparte, the mother of Napoleon, which was a favourite one of my childhood. I have never seen it or heard of it since, nor do I know anything of the author beyond the signature, which I find in an old extract-book to be "B. Simmonds." It seems to me the finest thing that ever was written upon Napoleon, so I shall copy it for you.

"It was the noon of a Roman day, that lit with mellow gloom,
Through marble-shafted windows deep, a grandly solemn room,
Where, shadowed o'er with canopy, and pillow'd upon down,
An aged woman lay unwatch'd, like perishing renown.

"No crowned one she, though in the pale and venerable grace
Of her worn cheek and lofty brow, might observation trace,
And in her dark eyes flash a fire and energy, to give
Life unto sons, whose sceptre-swords should vanquish all that live.

"Strange looked that lady old, reclined upon her lonely bed,
In that vast chamber, echoing not to page or maiden's tread ;
And stranger still, the gorgeous portrait forms that glanced around
From the high walls, with cold bright looks more eloquent than sound.

"They were her children—never yet, since with the primal beam
Fair painting brought on rainbow wings its own immortal dream,

Did one fond mother give such race beneath its smile to glow,
As they who now back on her brow their pictured glories throw.

“ Her daughters, these, the beautiful ! looked down in dazzling sheen,
One lovelier than the Queen of Love, one crowned an earthly queen :
Her sons, the proud, the Paladins ! with diadem and plume,
Each leaning on his sceptred arm, made empire of that room.

“ But right before her couch’s foot, one mightiest picture blazed,
One august form to which her eyes incessantly were raised ;
A monarch’s, too ! and, monarch-like, the artist’s hand had bound him
With jewelled belt, imperial sword, and ermine round him.

“ One well might deem, from the white flags that o’er him flashed and rolled,
Where the puissant lily laughed, and waved its bannered gold,
And from the Lombard’s iron crown beneath his hand which lay,
That Charlemagne had burst death’s reign, and leaped again to day.

“ How gleamed that awful countenance magnificently stern,
In its dark smile and smiting look what destiny we learn ;
The laurel simply wreathes that brow while nations watch its nod,
As though he scorned all pomp below the thunderbolts of God.

“ Such was the scene—the noon tide hour, which after many a year
Had swept above the memory of his meteor-like career,
Saw the mother of the mightiest, Napoleon’s mother lie,
With the living dead around her, with the past before her eye.

“ She saw her son, of whom the seer in Patmos bare record,
Who broke one seal, one vial poured, wild angel of the Lord ;
She saw him shadow earth beneath the terrors of his face,
And *lived* and knew that the hoarse sea-nymph wailed o’er his burial-place.”

Napoleon set sail from Elba with about five or six hundred men ; he did not reach Cannes without danger, for they fell in with a French brig-of-war with which they were obliged to speak. The Captain inquired after the health of the Emperor at Elba, and was answered,—“ Il se porte à mer-

veille." The officer in command of the Emperor's vessel wished to pursue and capture the brig, but the Emperor refused to take such an unnecessary step. His mind was bent on his own mighty plan, and rejected all minor ones that would interfere with it or endanger its success. They experienced a serious check on landing: twenty men who had been sent to call out the Imperialists of Antibes were imprisoned by the authorities. It was proposed to attack Antibes, but the Emperor said that would be no step towards the conquest of France. One of his officers hinted that it was not right to abandon the twenty men who had been made prisoners, and proposed to wait till they were released. "No," said Napoleon; "before us are thirty millions of men waiting to be set free." He added, that if half of his followers were in a similar situation he would not scruple to abandon them, and that if they were all imprisoned, he would march forwards alone.

The soldiers cut down the olives at the landing-place and made good fires; the flames and the smoke drew the attention of the peasants, who, on going to the spot, were thunderstruck to find the great Napoleon! Amongst others, a sailor, then a boy, crept amongst the knees of the tall grenadiers, and afterwards gave the following graphic account:—"I expected to see in the great Emperor a giant of a man, with a crown on his head, and covered all over with diamonds: instead of this, I saw a corpulent middle-aged man with a queer old hat on, and buttoned up in a

plain grey greatcoat! Every one of the officers that stood about him was finer and grander than he, but they all seemed to look up to him as a god, and spoke to him hat in hand; so I knew it was Napoleon. As I looked into the Emperor's face the fire glowed redly upon it, and it seemed as if it were *covered all over with blood.*" An elder brother, who was likewise gazing and wondering in the olive grove, enlisted on the spot, and, moreover, subtracted a mule for the Emperor's service. Two days after, he returned without his mule or the money for it; "so that the return of the Emperor from Elba," replied the sailor, "was a very sad thing indeed for our family!" In his bivouac, Napoleon received a more distinguished visitor. A postilion, in magnificent livery, was brought before him, for no one was allowed to pass without being examined. Strangely enough, it turned out that he had been a servant of Josephine's; he was now in the service of the Prince of Monaco, who had himself been an equerry of the Emperor's. The postilion was exceedingly astonished and delighted to see the Emperor, spoke in the most loyal manner, and gave him most gratifying information as to the state of feeling in Paris, and all along the road as far as Avignon. There was nothing, he said, but regrets for his absence, and that his name was echoed from mouth to mouth. The Prince of Monaco was then at Cannes, in the Hôtel Pinchinnat; he put on his court-dress, and hastened to pay his respects to Napoleon, whom he found, in great *déshabille*, resting under the olives, according to his

idea of repose, which consisted in walking up and down in his restless activity. The Prince was too cautious to commit himself by any exuberant loyalty in the existing state of affairs, and nothing could be more vague and unsatisfactory than his conversation. Napoleon, therefore, turned it to safer subjects, and they discussed with much animation the ladies of the Tuileries, about whom Napoleon inquired most minutely. It is said that at parting, the Emperor said to the Prince,—“Allez à votre état ; moi, je vais partir pour le mien.”

The inhabitants of Cannes were lukewarm in the Imperial cause. The father-in-law of M. Borniel Père (who is a resident in Cannes, and a most pleasing specimen of the old, courteous French gentleman) was then *préfet*. When applied to by Napoleon for assistance and fealty, he replied that he would pay him respect, and assist him with provisions, but that he could not serve him, as he was the King's servant. “Sir, I esteem you for it,” was Napoleon's answer. The next morning, at about two, when the moon rose, the Emperor proceeded to Grasse, where he bivouacked, and where there were more encouraging appearances of loyalty. Although the municipality were known to be opposed to him, they thought it wiser to render their submission. During the empire, he had planned a road from Grasse northward, which he was much disappointed to find had been given up by the Bourbons for want of money. He was therefore obliged to pass through narrow defiles filled with snow ; and,

in consequence, left behind him, at Grasse, his carriage, and two pieces of cannon which he had brought with him. In the bulletins of the day, this was called a "capture." Five days after, they encountered a battalion, the first they had seen. The commanding officer refused even to hold a parley. The Emperor advanced alone. The sight of the grey greatcoat of "the little corporal" produced a magical effect on the soldiers ; they stood motionless. Napoleon went straight up to them, having his head uncovered, and said, "Let him that has the heart, kill his Emperor." Then all arms were thrown down ; tears were seen in stern eyes and on rugged cheeks ; "Vive l'Empereur !" was shouted with voices faltering, but not from indecision. The Emperor ordered them to wheel to the right, and all marched on together towards Paris and the Imperial throne. A few days later, there was one touching scene, amongst many which resulted from the overwhelming joy and attachment of the peasantry for their idol, and the transports of his own old soldiers. A handsome young man, belonging to the Guards, had disappeared from the time of the landing in the Gulf of Juan, which had created a good deal of uneasiness and suspicion. He, too, advanced to throw himself at the Emperor's feet, with tears glistening in his eyes, and supporting an old man of ninety years of age, in search of whom he had gone the moment of landing, in order to present him to his Emperor. The breach of discipline was forgiven and forgotten, and, after the arrival of Napoleon at the Tuileries, he ordered a picture to be painted of this touching incident.

Fréjus, which is not very far from Cannes, on the other side of the Esterels, was the scene of another landing of Napoleon. Fresh from the laurels of the battle of Alexandria, which covered his former losses in the East, he landed at Fréjus on the 9th of October 1799, and was received with universal acclamation ; very different from the fear, and the doubt, and the amazement of his appearance at Cannes, and very different also from that other presence of his on these shores—when he sailed forth from Fréjus, one April day in 1814, dethroned and degraded, to his exile at Elba. What a mistake it was to remove the ashes of Napoleon Buonaparte from the wild, lonely burial-place of St. Helena to the tame splendour of their present abode ! The “ hoarse sea-mew,” the wail of the ocean, the rustle of the willows, the quiet green sward, were more appropriate for the “ Lion of the Desert,” for the wild “ Fire King.”*

* Napoleon, in connexion with his hopes of conquest in the East, used to say that his name signified “ Lion of the Desert.” After the fearful volleys of musketry and grape-shot at the Battle of the Pyramids, the natives called him the “ Fire King.”

LETTER XVIII.

MAISON REYNAUD, *May* 6.—The character of the Roman Catholic religion at Cannes is not interesting, I am told by those who have resided here for some time. The women only can be reached by the priests for any public demonstration, and the peasantry are buried in their olive vats and perfumes, which are not elevating in real life, however refined and sentimental they may sound in poetry. Apparently, therefore, it is a very discouraging field for missionary exertions, from the extreme deadness and want of interest in higher things. There has not been wanting, however, earnest effort, and even some amount of success. About ten or twelve years ago, a considerable circulation of Bibles and tracts took place. Mr. Lillingston, a most excellent man, spent a winter here, and occupied himself in distributing copies of the New Testament, and a little tract of his own composition—“Qui est le meilleur médecin ?” Colonel Tronchin, and other Protestants at Geneva, were also interested in Cannes, and

sent thither some colporteurs, and an excellent missionary, M. Charbonnet, to superintend them. The work went on gradually under M. Charbonnet's influence ; a good many professed Protestant doctrines, but several went back when they saw that a consistent "confession" would injure their worldly interests. This was felt, especially with reference to the observance of the Sabbath. Of a few, however, the missionary had good hope. A Roman Catholic priest, from a neighbouring town, left his church and became a missionary under the friends of the Gospel at Geneva.

It was soon after this time that a great deal of opposition arose against M. Charbonnet's proceedings, and favoured by some election business, the Bishop of Fréjus made an attack upon the work, and owing to M. Charbonnet being a native of Switzerland and not of France, the bishop obtained his dismission. M. Boucher, who had lived for some time in the neighbourhood, and had been interested in the work, then came forward, and was appointed by the Consistory of Marseilles as their delegate, and the chapel, which had been closed for a season, was re-opened. About this time, also, a friend of the work at Cannes called upon Lord Brougham in Paris, and found no difficulty in interesting him on the subject, though he had resided at Cannes without knowing of there being any Protestants there. On showing him a list of names petitioning the Chamber of Deputies in favour of the mission, he at once said that he would do all in his power in the right direction. With his usual energy, he wrote

shortly afterwards, that he had seen two of the ministers on the subject, who promised that they would look into the matter. After this all went on smoothly, M. Boucher being aided by M. —— the converted priest ; nor has there since then been any manifestation of opposition.

M. Boucher's health soon failed, however, and it was thought advisable to appoint a new pastor to the charge, and to remove M. —— to another sphere of labour, as his former ecclesiastical position made Cannes an unsuitable place for him. M. Rey now occupies the post. He is a member of the Free Church of France as it is termed, and has succeeded M. Boucher as delegate of the Consistory of Marseilles. He has lately achieved the opening of a school in connexion with his church, which it is hoped will be useful.

The provision for public worship for the English and other strangers at Cannes, is of the most liberal description. A beautiful little Episcopal Church has been erected on the property of Mr. Woolfield, and chiefly at his own expense. Its pulpit has been occupied this winter, and it is hoped will be next winter also, by a clergyman—not of this party or that party, not of Paul or Cephas—but of the Gospel. Driven from his own English flock by delicacy of health, his faithful ministrations and consistent conduct soothe and comfort and instruct many a stranger in this strange land, to whatever denomination they belong. Cannes, from some circumstances connected with its early visitors, has become much known in Scotland, and a Scottish Free Church service

is held every Sunday and Wednesday, in a chapel built by Admiral Pakenham. There is also a French meeting in a private house, for those who hold the views of the Plymouth Brethren, which is sometimes attended by members of other churches.* Many people consider the variety of places of worship in this place as a great disadvantage—tending to produce in Roman Catholics a still stronger idea than they already possess of the want of Christian union among Protestants. I cannot see it in this light. On the contrary, it seems as if it might be made a powerful argument in favour of the Christian love and charity resulting from liberty of conscience, founded on the doctrines of the Bible. Surely many of the errors of the Church in all ages have been caused by struggles after what never can be attained in this world—unity, or uniformity of mind, instead of what really is attainable, unity of spirit. Many churches, and many loving hearts would be a nearer approach to true union than one church filled with minds rebelling against an intellectual yoke, and hearts of which it could not be said—“Behold how they love each other!” The dear old “Friends in Council” say truly,—“Uniformity does not consist with the higher forms of vitality. Even the leaves of the same tree are said to differ each one from all the rest. And can it be good for the soul of a man, ‘with a biography of its own like no one else’s,’ to subject

* I am told that since the period referred to, the authorities have put a stop to this meeting.

itself without thought to the opinions and ways of others,—not to grow into symmetry, but to be moulded down into conformity?"

At Cannes, as in other places, there is still much to be done before this unity of heart can shine forth like a light in a dark place.

" Alas for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun."

Cannes is generally remarked as being a place where a great many people congregate every year, belonging, more or less, to what is generally called "religious society." There is so little temptation for "gay" invalids to settle at Cannes, that they and their friends generally go on to Nice. At Cannes there is no Corso, no gay Boulevards du Midi—no fashionable lounges, no balls, no theatres, no fine shops, no billiard tables, no smartly-dressed ladies and gentlemen—all of which being found at Nice, render it as suitable for those pining for rest and freedom from excitement as Piccadilly or the Rue Rivoli. At Cannes we have country quiet, less exciting air, tranquil companionship, and many religious privileges. This is the second winter that the Duchess of Gordon has resided here, and she is ever foremost in promoting everything that is good and pleasant. Hers is a rarely sweet, genial, cheerful spirit. If she had passed through life in any of its most humble spheres, she would have left the world the better for her genial influence. As it is, her position and her dignified

charm of manner give her much weight with many minds not otherwise easily reached, which she faithfully uses.

Every Monday evening the Duchess has a quiet social gathering at Château Court, where there is a portion of Scripture read and discussed in a candid and friendly manner, begun and ended with prayer and sacred music. There is much interest and instruction brought out by thus comparing the thoughts of many minds, while the friendly, cheerful, and cordial spirit prevailing among those forming the group of listeners and speakers, will never, I think, be forgotten by any who have had the privilege of being present.

LETTER XIX.

MAISON REYNAUD, *May* 9.—The number of beautiful walks and rides here is quite remarkable. I went this evening, with a young friend, to take a donkey promenade ; and I must remark, *en passant*, that Nice has greatly the advantage of us in respect to means of conveyance. We pay much more here for very inferior machines and quadrupeds, than on the other side of the Var. Surely, however, dear donkeys and exorbitant carriages must find their level in a year or two. I am speaking feelingly, for I have had many donkey distresses, and always pay double what I paid at Cimiez. We went to see the old Roman bridge to the west of Cannes. It neither looks very Roman nor very old, but one was obliged to make the most of some ivy, and a good buttress or two. It is said that Hannibal crossed ~~this~~ bridge on his way to conquer Gaul, and I really don't see why one may not have the pleasure of believing it ! We went up beyond the bridge, by a very pretty mule road, to

the top of the range of hills to the west ;—the well-known objects, the château, church, and tower of Mont Chevalier, assuming a new position, with the islands immediately behind them ; and on the other side of the hill, Grasse and Mougins, and valley mists and Alpine snows. We returned by dusk, as the sun had sunk from us unawares. The deep red glare of the shops without windows, the ring of the anvil in some crowded smithy, the skeleton poles of the out-of-door shops, bereft for the night of their gay colours and hangings, the women sitting on their door-steps, knitting by the failing light, and gossiping merrily, the old nooks, and corners, and gables of the lanes, and the Grande Rue (with its central gutter !), and the noise of talking under the graceful flowers and foliage of the acacias, were all highly characteristic and therefore not uninteresting sights. What a pity it is that people can't be clean and picturesque at the same time ! How very inferior a tidy, regular, brick model village, with slated roofs and square porches, would be to the pretty old French streets ; yet, probably, there might be more sanatory beauty in the former ! I rather sympathize in the naïve exclamation which I remember hearing from a little girl, in presence of a renovated cathedral, “ Oh, what a pity ; they have taken away all the nice dirt ! ”

L. and the children have been hunting for ferns with tolerable success, though people who have lived here for years, say that there are only two or three kinds. The beautiful *Capillus Veneris*, or Maiden-hair, and the *Ceterach*

Officinarum, or scaly Hart's-tongue, grow here freely, the former with fronds eighteen inches in length. The *Adiantum Nigrum* has more delicate fronds than at home: the common Polypody is also much softer and prettier in this climate, which is strange, considering the greater dryness. There are two varieties of *Trichomanes*, looking quite at home; and there is a scented fern quite different from the English *Oreopteris*, besides various kinds of common ferns; but the gem of the whole collection is the tiniest, fairest-looking fern that ever was seen. It is found on a vine-wall close to the Route de Fréjus, about a mile west from Cannes. It is about an inch high, with dark glossy fruit on its delicate little green fronds. I cannot find out the name. It is not found among British ferns.

We have plenty of the pretty little lizards here, which go darting about the old walls, with such a graceful flying movement. I have not seen, however, the bright green kind, of which there are so many at Nice.

May 11.—The olfactory nerve is smitten in two ways in or near my present abode. Next door is a perfumery, and a little further on a soapery! When you pass the door of the latter, the odours are perfectly insupportable; and when L. and I attempted to penetrate the interior, again and again we had to give it up in despair. Determined not to be baffled, however, and with noses and mouths buried in pocket-handkerchiefs, we at last found ourselves

in the presence of huge boiling vats,—“*pâte*,”—“*lessine*,”—and pretty marbled soap, the result of the previous horrors. The son of the master went round with us—a most intelligent and courteous young man, who seemed considerably surprised and amused at our thirst for manufacturing lore, and at the muffled condition of our organs of speech and scent, which somewhat interfered with the intelligibility of our questions. So far from the soap-making, and its overpowering odours, being unwholesome, which one might naturally expect, there has not been one case of fever, or other epidemic among the workmen, either now or formerly. It was with a comic look that our guide answered a question about its healthfulness, by “*Voilà mon père*,” as a remarkably stout, florid, healthy-looking personage, made his appearance, who lived with all his family in the very precincts which we had approached with so much pain and difficulty. This agrees with medical reports, doctors having a far greater dislike of perfumes, delicious as they are. The proprietor of the perfumery near this house was the only person from whom I did not meet the most ready and intelligent courtesy. He must have been trying to put on a little John Bullism. However, he was gracious enough to make no objection to our walking through his premises, though he did not dream of accompanying us. The soap-making is a much more enjoyable process, however ; there is something sadly undignified in seeing the bonnie little flowers stripped of their green robes, and flung irreverently

into the black dirty vats. There was a very long table, which was quite a curious sight. It was heaped up high with pink roses ; and on each side there was a busy row of workers, plucking off green leaves and calyxes, and flinging them on the floor, where they formed a verdant carpet. Sundry bottles of *vin ordinaire*, and slices of bread, and such like, which displayed themselves on the rose table, were rather destructive of its sentiment.

May 12.—D. and I paid another and a last visit to Le Cannet—a favourite spot. Our object was to hunt for a very old chimney-piece, which we were told was extant in the village. On our way we passed a curious square tower, or house, with the door half-way up the wall, and an outside stone staircase. This appeared a likely locality for our chimney-piece, but though the squalid-looking inhabitants who were sitting outside, acknowledged the great age of the tower, they ignored the existence of chimney-pieces. Everybody that we met we persecuted with inquiries, but melancholy shakes of the head, or wondering negatives, were our only satisfaction. The more desperate the case became, the more our hearts were set upon the ancient chimney-piece, while we remembered sadly and longingly that it was said to be in the shape of a tree. At last we knocked at a respectable-looking house, determined to try once more. Upon making the usual inquiries of a nice “canty-looking” old lady, who opened the door, to our surprise she answered in English,

begging us to come in, and she would tell us all about the chimney-piece ! This Madame — is the only English-woman resident at Le Cannet, and is the widow of a French officer who died thirty-five years ago, during which time she has lived entirely there, never having seen a railway, and rarely her own country people, till this summer, when she became acquainted with Mrs. H. B., and several other English visitors at Cannes. Her rooms, though dark and scantily furnished, could boast of all the cleanliness of her country, and the little balcony was bright with well-tended flowers. Madame — speaks French more easily than English, and was always going off from the one to the other, we doing ditto, and then back again till one became doubtful which language one was really conversing in. Well, but the chimney ! Our new friend immediately entered upon details of its beauty and rarity, finishing off by a comforting assurance that it was not in the least old ; it was made only the other day ! You might have knocked me down with a feather ! and I resolutely refused to be taken to see any such mushroom of a chimney-piece. However, Madame was so urgent and so confident of our admiration, that we followed in a meek depressed manner through odd little lanes and walks among orange groves, and the richest perfumes, and the softest evening air, till we came to a château, which caused us to rub our eyes several times before we could persuade ourselves that we were in France, and not in fairy-land. A Moorish-looking court,

two slender towers, large weeping-willows, cool splashing fountains, and rock-work interspersed with the greenest of ferns, cast a *glamour* over us which prevented any cynical criticisms on the congruity or purity of the architecture. Much to Madame's disappointment and our relief, M. Sarde, the proprietor, was not at home; however, she and the servant insisted on our going in, and seeing the house. In the *salon* sure enough was *the* chimney, our chimney, of so many hopes and fears! Imagine a yellowish white marble tree, with a fireplace underneath, and mirrors in the interstices of the branches, which reach to the roof, and you have the fresh, clean, new chimney-piece of M. Sarde's drawing-room! Every corner of the house was in the most spotless and beautiful order. No expense spared in decoration, which, if not always in the best taste, was at least always piquant and original. The designs and colouring of some of the painted glass windows were beautiful, and were designed by M. Sarde himself. We were taken into his bedroom, which was quite a "show" room. The bed was made of white marble, or something that had the effect of white marble,—with a beautiful figure of Silence bending over the pillow. A startling knock was heard at the outer door—it was M. Sarde! It was altogether so unlike any place I had ever been in, that I half expected to see Blue Beard rush in with a drawn sword in his hand. M. Sarde, however, turned out to be a very polite middle-aged French bachelor, with "a man and a maid," like the hero of

Maude, though it is to be hoped that they bear a better moral character than those poetical English domestics. He delights himself in his pretty whims and conceits—is very hospitable to his neighbours—and very kind to the poor, to whom he gives a grand fête once a year. He is a native of Le Cannet, and having made his fortune in trade, has returned to spend it in his native village. He took us across curious little bridges, from tower to tower, till we arrived at the topmost story, and looked down on an unrivalled view. Then we said good-bye reluctantly to him and our kind English guide, and wended our way home, quite proud of our adventure. Madame told us that there are few very poor people in Le Cannet—each has a little cot and orange-trees.

May 13.—Having heard a great deal of certain *oubliettes* under the square tower of the Mont Chevalier, I set off to explore them this evening, as nobody else was in an antiquarian mood. I had the good luck to encounter a French gentleman, in a red nightcap—no, I beg his pardon, a red smoking-cap—who took a great deal of trouble, and hunted up an old woman with a lantern, and as he knew something of antiquities was very useful. Down we went into dark holes, which ought to have been *oubliettes* if they were not, and where I nearly killed myself by innocently supposing that I was walking on an even floor, and descending instead into a very deep hole. These dungeons were under the château—those under the tower being quite inaccessible, unless by a

ladder to the top, and then by another inside, to the regions below,—a feat too hazardous to be attempted. This tower is popularly termed Saracenic. Now, if I *have* a weakness, it is for Moorish remains. You may imagine, therefore, how very indignant I feel to be informed by M. Mérimée, and other disagreeably “good authorities,” not only that this particular tower was built in the eleventh century by a loyal son of the Church, Aldebert II., Abbé of Lérins, but that there are no authentic Saracenic remains throughout France. The brilliant triumph of the Moors, A.D. 721, followed up by the victorious march of a thousand miles by Abdelrahman Abderame, from Gibraltar to the Loire, was too short and precarious, I suppose, for many lasting trophies to be erected, though for a time their manners and religion prevailed in the South of France. Checked, in 732, by the “Hammer” of Charles Martel, their further attacks and invasions, though often bloody and successful, were too short-lived to leave any traces but those of legend and name,—a range of the Esterels being still called *Les Maures*.

Going up to the Mont Chevalier, there is a curious arch, resembling a triumphal one, which is called in the Provençal language *Lou Posterlo*, or *Chemin de Traverse*. According to the tradition of the country, a permanent sentinel was always stationed there in time of war. The stones of the square tower are cut diamond-fashion, and like the round towers of Ireland, the door, or aperture resembling a window, is high up, and must have been reached by a ladder or stair-

case of light material, as there is no mark or remnant on the wall of a stone staircase, such as that of the Le Cannet square tower ; or there may have been a bridge from the top of the neighbouring building, which is quite near. Among the old houses upon Mont Chevalier, there is a gateway in the form of a horse-shoe arch, which looks *very* Saracenic !

LETTER XX.

May 15.—Of a long-hoped-for excursion to the island of St. Honorat, I have always been disappointed till yesterday, for it has depended on the treacherous gusts, and mistral, and “white horses” of the Mediterranean. Day after day have groups of anxious faces looked out from windows, or from the pier-head, but the sea has never been smooth enough to satisfy fastidious and sea-sick imaginations. One day, indeed, not long ago, we set sail bravely, but got no farther than the island of Ste. Marguerite—the boatmen declaring that it would not be safe to cross the “*Friou*,” or narrow channel between the two islands. We had a pretty good guess that it was because they had engaged with another “fare” at Cannes. However, “good folks are scarce,” and we answered the alarming query,

“Why tempt the stormy waves to-day?”

with more practical common sense than did the fair Lady

Rosabel St. Clair on a somewhat similar occasion. The sea *did* become rather more boisterous later in the day ; and as we went up and down over the swelling waves on our return in a little cockle-shell boat, with sails catching every sudden gust, we congratulated ourselves on our boatmen's treachery, and our submissiveness. That was not a "lost day," however, for sketching, shelling, and botanizing flourished. We saw the wild artichoke, and wild asparagus, and a shrub said to be the "incense tree," and numbers of the beautiful little white rock-rose or cistus, upon the branches of which, by the bye, is found the odorous gum called ladanum, which is erroneously translated *myrrh*, among the spices mentioned in the Old Testament. In Arabia, the goats feed upon the cistus, and the herdsmen drive their herd to pasture before the sun has dried up the soft resinous gum. It thus adheres to the goats' beards, from whence the purest is always gathered, as what the herdsmen gather from the branches is generally mixed more or less with dust.*

We enjoyed our pic-nic under the shade of trees by the water-edge, and we had some more interviews with the Arabs, who were performing their duties as "hewers of wood and drawers of water." One of them, in speaking of the French, eked out his very scanty language, by drawing his hand across his throat ; though whether to signify a desire to cut anybody else's throat, or a fear of having his own cut, we could not quite make out. At the pier we saw a touching

* *Flowers from the Holy Land.* By Robert Tyas.

scene—a very old blind Arab, embarking with a guard in a little boat. He was in the greatest distress at parting with his friends, and wept bitterly. Upon making inquiry, we found that he was to be taken to Marseilles to have his eyes couched. When I saw the Arabs last, one of them volunteered to write a few words of his own language in my sketch-book, which the officer present understood, and allowed to pass. The fame of this autograph went abroad, and several young ladies hastened to Ste. Marguerite with new albums. The Arabs played their part of "lions" admirably, and wrote long pieces of Arabic in the albums: The officer who understood the language was absent, and the other officials resolutely refused to let the volumes go out of their hands, as they did not know what treason they might contain, unless the offending pages were torn out. Rather than adopt this humiliating alternative, the poor albums were left in prison, though they were ultimately restored to their fair owners. We likewise saw a part of the island, which I had never seen before—"Le grand Jardin," a large, beautiful garden, where a peculiarly fine kind of orange grows freely, along with many heat-loving plants, for it is considered the warmest and most sheltered spot in Provence. The pine forest protects it from the north, it is exposed to the south, and in summer refreshed by the soft sea-breezes. I did not know, till too late to examine it, that a building in the middle of the garden is of great interest, and has excited considerable discussion among antiquaries as to its date and purpose. Of late, how-

ever, the proprietor has, I believe, greatly changed and perhaps “improved” it, according to *un-antiquarian* ideas.

The Iron Mask was not the only prisoner of name in the Fort Ste. Marguerite. The poet Lagrange-Chancel* was sent thither as a prisoner of State. He offended the Regent by some satirical odes or *Philippics*, in which he was accused of all manner of crimes. Lagrange thought it prudent to retire to the Comtat Venaissin, an old county of France, on the east bank of the Rhone, which then belonged to the Pope. A French officer, accused of murder, had also taken refuge there, and was offered a free pardon if he could succeed in inveigling the poet upon French ground. Under pretence of a promenade, the plan succeeded, and Lagrange was immediately seized and sent to Ste. Marguerite, where his wit and intelligence so softened the heart of the governor, that he was allowed much liberty. The satirical vein, however, was not easily repressed. Some piquant sarcasms against the weak points of the friendly jailer, again straitened the captivity. Notwithstanding, the satirical poet managed to effect his escape, more fortunate than the hapless Iron Mask.

Neither were fine ladies wanting in the island. In 1807,† Madame la Duchesse d’Escars was exiled there, accompanied by her daughter, on account of the freedom with which she

* Joseph de Chancel de la Grange, commonly called Lagrange-Chancel, born 1676, and died 1758. See *Biographie Universelle*, tom. xxiii. p. 153.

† *Biographie Universelle*, Supp. lxiii. p. 408.

had expressed her political opinions. Two months of it was enough, and then they contrived to be transferred to Nice.

The Fort of Ste. Marguerite obtained some military renown in 1707, when the Duke of Savoy invaded Provence. On the 15th of July, the enemy approached Cannes, several parts of the road being commanded by the cannons of the island-fort, then under the command of M. de la Mothe Guérin. The cannonading was kept up with such good-will, that the invaders were obliged to halt, and the Duke of Savoy sent a message to the Commandant, that if he did not stop firing immediately, he and his garrison should have no quarter. The firing continued vigorously. Still the rebel army approached. The cannonading was redoubled—the little garrison of four detached companies wishing to conceal its smallness and weakness by putting a bold face on the matter. In fine, they carried the day, greatly to the indignation of the Duke of Savoy, who said long afterwards, in speaking of M. de la Mothe Guérin, “ C'est sous le feu des Isles Sainte Marguerite, que j'ai mieux connu qu'en aucun autre lieu que j'étais en pays ennemi.”

Yesterday, we had a perfect day at last for St. Honorat, everything smiling upon us. The island, which is a treasure-house of antiquity, is small and oval-shaped, with magnificent *débris* of rocks scattered about the landing-place in picturesque confusion. We first explored a belt of old pines, with a shady walk beneath them, where we came upon a ruined fortification, which was treated with silent contumely,

when we found that it was as young as the time of the Spaniards who took the islands in 1635. Retracing our steps, we went eastward round the island, passing a small octagon building, of which the form was beautiful ; it was once a chapel dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, but it has been built up again into a receptacle for nets and boating apparatus. A little farther on are the ruins of a chapel dedicated to Saint Cyprian and Sainte Justine. Then we crossed the island to the Monastery Château, which presents a strange combination of the religious and the military. The Isle of Saints was the Isle of Martyrs also. The ravages of Saracenic corsairs were frequent and destructive. Five hundred of the monks were slain by these ruffians, A.D. 725, who for centuries continued their attacks on the defenceless brethren. The great tower in the centre of the monastic building was, therefore, built and strongly fortified in the eleventh century, for the purpose of protecting the island and its holy inhabitants. It is now the property of an English clergyman, who is renovating it, it is said, with a view to render it habitable. It was across the *débris* of modern masonry that we made our way with great difficulty into the central court of the tower, where we paused in astonishment and delight. If we could only have tossed the workmen and their hammers, and some new staring little pillars into the sea, there would have been nothing more to wish for. It far surpassed my expectation. There are four galleries supported by six marble or granite

pillars,—one pink, another dark-green, the others yellowish, upon one of which there is an inscription, which, unfortunately, was not pointed out to us at the time; I believe it runs thus—CONSTANTINO AUGUSTO, DIV. These galleries enclose a small square court, in which there is an ancient cistern. Rising above are two storeys on the same construction as the lower, but with smaller columns, which are undergoing the process of restoration. In this part of the building there is the Chapelle de la Sainte Croix, where are buried, St. Honorat, St. Venance his brother, and St. Capraise his spiritual teacher, the three ancient worthies of the holy island. From the top of the tower we gazed upon a magnificent panoramic view with the sea at our very feet, for the château appears almost to be built in the sea, with long reefs of rocks on three sides. At the top there are many remains of the works added by the Spaniards for artillery, and when the Government sold the château it reserved the right of placing cannon on the tower, should a maritime war give occasion for them. Below, there are several dark vaulted chambers, in one of which there is another cistern, and there is also a large apartment which had probably been used as a kitchen. Near the château there is a palm-tree, which is said to be an offshoot from a large one which flourished in the day of St. Honorat, and upon which he mounted on his arrival in the island, extending his hands in prayer, that the sea might come up and destroy the serpents that infested it,—which prayer was accordingly

granted. We next went to see the large church belonging to the monastery, which was dedicated to St. Honorat. The remains of the chapel and cloisters are beautiful and most interesting. At the present door of entrance there is a solitary pillar of red marble broken in the centre ; it is very old, and is, I believe, allowed to be Roman. It is curious to observe that the whole disposition of the church has been changed ; the altar was on the side where the entrance now is, and the ancient door, of which there are still traces, occupied the place of the altar. In the primitive arrangement the altar was turned towards the east, according to the usual custom. From that time the church was in the form of a Latin Cross, the transepts of which still remain. M. Mérimée believes that the walls and cloisters of this edifice are very ancient, probably dating from the eighth or even the seventh century.

I cannot resist copying for you an extract which I find quoted in the Abbé Alliez's book, which describes exactly the effect on the mind of such an assemblage of ruined buildings :—“ Pourquoi les ruines excitent-elles plus d'intérêt qu'un monument intact, quelque beau qu'il puisse être ? Immuable sans être éternel, fini sans être parfait, ce monument fatigue à la longue l'enthousiasme le plus opiniâtre. On le revoit aujourd'hui tel qu'il était hier ; il sera demain aussi beau aussi régulier qu'il est à l'heure présente ; il ne faut pas se hâter pour en jouir. Une ruine, au contraire, que chaque jour semble modifier, s'altère et se décompose avec

une célérité effrayante ; cette ruine, dis-je, nous attire par sa caducité même, qui nous laisse entrevoir une mort, une destruction plus ou moins prochaine. Ces débris ont quelque chose d'animé, de vivant, d'humain enfin, qui manque aux édifices jeunes et entières."

I was very far from feeling satisfied with the number of ruins I had seen ; and having been told that there was a chapel well worth seeing in the middle of the island, and having no guide, I determined to set off in search of it. Upon asking a little girl the way, she shook her head and pointed quite in another direction to the eastern point of the island, where, she said, there was a chapel. I wandered on finding nothing, till I saw at last, close to the sea, a low square fort, with an immense block of stone over the door, a very small window or aperture above, and a little red cross on one side. I looked in, and stood breathless and awed, for a moment almost hesitating to enter, so unexpected was it to find a very old strange dark chapel inside those modern military-looking walls. There was no light except from the aperture over the door, and the place was kept in very bad order, and was very dirty. It was the Chapelle de la Sainte Trinité, and it is considered of great interest from the strange irregularity of its form. Not one part of it corresponds with another ; each is eccentric and isolated. There is a singular arch evidently built by those who did not understand the principle. Up to a certain point all had gone smoothly, but the top had puzzled the poor archi-

tect excessively, who, at last, finished it off in a most eccentric and unbusiness-like manner. Close to the chapel, which had been fortified by the Spaniards, is one of their batteries. I was still sure that there was another chapel, but it was getting late, so I returned to the landing-place on the west of the island, near which I saw, accidentally, a small house, which had escaped our notice in the morning. It had a tiled roof, white-washed walls, and, except for a strange want of windows, might have been a peasant's cottage. At last we found a door, over it a small round window, and upon entering, again I was struck by surprise. It was an ancient octagon chapel ! very different from La Trinité, for everything was in strict accordance with uniformity. Opposite the door is the apse,* of semi-circular form, containing a rude stone altar with three holes in it, supported on one foot : the other six sides are each formed into arched niches, and the roof is in the shape of a dome. The walls are blackened by smoke, the chapel having been used as a fold for goats, and the shepherds having been in the habit of lighting fires, this increases the gloom of this strange place, well contrasted with the blueness of the sky, which one sees from that small window, and the gold light which plays on its rough black edges, and the green vines which are seen from the old

* The apse, as far as I can make out, was the semi-circular part of the old basilica, which contained the tribune. When these basilicas were converted into Christian churches, the altar was erected there, and the form continued to be frequently copied in ecclesiastical buildings.

broken door. Gloom and desolation within—brightness and beauty without. This was the Chapelle de St. Sauveur. It was with great reluctance that we turned away from this charming island, leaving it still only half explored and enjoyed. Very lovely were the lilac and golden mists which hung over the hills, and the lights dancing over the mirror-like sea, as we returned home in the evening. The colour of the waters of the Mediterranean is a perpetual source of wonder and admiration. Close to the island we sometimes see it of the brightest, most beautiful green, with oyster-beds shining beneath, but farther out it is of a deep, opaque blue, which I never remember seeing anywhere else, at least never *so* blue and *so* thick. Is it only from the reflection of the sky, or can it be because of the greater saltiness of the water? Maury in his work upon the temperature of the sea mentions this as the cause of the greater blueness of the gulf-stream, which can be distinctly traced amidst all other sea-water during its marvellous course, by its different shade of colour.

To-day I have been to Vallauris, to call upon M. le Curé Alliez, whose name I have already often mentioned, but whom I have never before seen. I went for the purpose of asking for information about the antiquities of Cannes and its neighbourhood, and I only wish we had had him for our cicerone in the island yesterday. Nothing could be more courteous than his reception, and his indulgence for bad French, ignorance, and nervousness. There was not wanting in his keen

eye, however, a twinkle of satirical archness when he found that he had actually in his presence a feminine scribbler, talking, moreover, like the Charming Woman, "of things she don't understand." Many and amusing were his cautions not to believe everything that was in print; as ladies, he evidently thought, were peculiarly given to fables and legends, which, he properly observed, were to be placed on quite another footing from antiquarian facts. He was evidently familiar with the works of Sir Walter Scott, for it was with another arch twinkle that he referred to the *Antiquary* and his antiquarian disappointments. To every one of my questions, M. Alliez replied by placing before me the page of some old folio upon the very subject. As I suspected, there were several remains which we never saw. There are the ruins of seven little chapels, which were built round the island, and we only numbered four. It is an extraordinary fact, that St. Sauveur is not mentioned in the Chronicles of the Lérins, and local tradition is silent also. M. Mérimée believes it to have been an ancient baptistery connected with the abbey, and probably the first Christian edifice erected on the island. M. le Curé finds in it a great likeness to the Chapel of St. Sauveur at Grasse, which many believe to have been a temple of Jupiter, to which opinion he evidently inclines. The island of Ste. Marguerite was called *Lero*, because of an altar or temple erected there to the honour of Lero, a celebrated pirate chief, which seems a strange confusion of ideas. The neighbouring smaller island

took the diminutive *Lerina*. According to Pliny, and confirmed by Strabo, there was once a town in its narrow precincts, which must certainly have been on a small scale. The number of monks was, however, incredibly great; a visitor to the island in very ancient days, having irreverently remarked, that the monks and the rabbits were more numerous than the hairs of the head. About 690, a chronicler of *Lérins* speaks of 3700 monks who lived under the direction of the Abbé. Of course, the island could not hold them, however closely packed, but many lived in *Ste. Marguerite*, and in the deserts and forests of the mainland.

It is always interesting to get a glimpse into a life very different from one's own life and the lives surrounding one. The little study of the *Curé*, cool and darkened from the noontide heat—the evidences of constant intellectual labour,—the obscure village, in which so much knowledge and intelligence seemed wasted,—the remembrance that from that little home were withheld the solaces which might have surrounded it in Protestant lands,—the conviction that into the higher classes of mind no decrees of Church can prevent doubts from intruding, though, instead of being answered and soothed, they are smothered and rebuked, and therefore fostered,—thoughts about all these things came, even while antiquities were being busily discussed. *M. le Curé* was, I believe, chaplain to a man-of-war, a strangely different life from his present one. He showed us a thick manuscript, written in minute but beautiful characters,—it is that of

another work which he is about to publish, to be called *Etudes Historiques sur le Monastère de Lérins*. He has corrected it eight times! When he was collecting materials for this history, a lady said to him,—“J'avais chez moi deux énormes corbeilles de papiers venus de l'Abbaye.”—“Et vous me les communiquerez, sans doute,” said the Curé.—“Quelle chose! les domestiques les ont brûlés!”

There is nothing interesting at Vallauris except its situation and its name, which signifies the “valley of gold,” *vallis aurea*, and was given to it by the Romans. Such a name, of course, raises one's expectation to Californian and Australian riches, but it was so named only from the profusion and excellence of its golden oranges, for which it was celebrated then as now. We went through a pottery, which is ever interesting in all lands,—to us who are the clay in the hands of a Potter, it must bring many thoughts to see the reality of the Scripture type. At Vallauris the principal articles were the earthenware jars, which, sometimes red and sometimes green, and of not unpicturesque shapes, invariably take the place of kettles and pitchers in Provence and the North of Italy.

LETTER XXXI.

May 16.—My time here is now so short, that each day brings more to be seen and done than there is quite time or strength for. To-day our excursion was to Auribeau, whither Mr. and Mrs. Evans kindly took me. The scenery was very different from anything that I have seen in this country. The character of it is quite English, fields of wheat, a quiet little river, green meadows, and very few olives. Auribeau is a town upon a hill, situated in a “hilly country,” and, like all such, rich in magnificent views ; that from the road up to the town, bordered with fine forest trees, is particularly beautiful. On the other side, by scrambling down a little rugged path, you see a different view—a waterfall, a stream of water, and a sloping bank, down which piles of wood are slid, in order to be floated down the water to the distant sea. We went into the church of Auribeau, a peculiarly neat one, without any frippery ; the altar is of white marble, and there is a picture in a pretty

old frame, which was presented by Louis Philippe. In order to patronize young artists of the day, he was in the habit of buying a great number of inferior pictures, which he did not very well know what to do with. It was said, however, that Louis Philippe liked to bribe the deputies of the provinces, who in their turn bribed the electors ; and one of the superfluous pictures as a royal gift to the obscure little village of Auribeau, was an economical device—more economical, though not so useful, as the new or improved road, which was likewise a pledge of royal favour, of the same epoch. In 1707, Auribeau successfully resisted the attacks of the Imperialists, not always, however, with the most dignified weapons. They put their enemies to flight, by introducing into the camp a great many swarms of patriotic French bees, which instantly inflicted torments upon the foe, who were compelled to fly ! Our coachman informed us that at Auribeau there was nothing to be compared in beauty, and interest, and magnificence, to a chapel which he pointed out to us far below, and which he said was only five minutes' walk from the carriage-road. It turned out to be much further, but a pleasant walk in pleasant company, through a shady woodland dell, was no hardship. The Chapelle de Nôtre Dame de Vaucluse, which at last we found in the depths of this secluded, almost uninhabited glen, astonished us by its size and handsome appearance. Its great peculiarity consists in the number of its works of art. The walls and pillars of the church formed an exhibi-

tion of pictures. They were all votive offerings, and represented scenes and dangers in the lives of the donors, for their miraculous escape from which they thus express their gratitude. Most of them were more ludicrous than can be expressed, from the total want of perspective and proportion. A young lady tumbling down stairs, in a composed methodical manner—a cart passing over an old woman, as unlike an old woman and cart as possible—a horse throwing a little boy, all legs and arms, into the air, and so on. Yet, however ludicrous, I could not help thinking that it was not a bad idea, thus to preserve the records of the so-called accidents and preservations, which we are too apt to dismiss ungratefully from our memories.

The frère who had the charge of the church had been working in the fields, being only a lay brother, but he speedily put himself *en costume*, and proved to have quite a painter's eye. He was quite as much amused, and more horrified than ourselves, at the bad drawings, and all those that he pointed out as better specimens of art were really so. This chapel was built towards the middle of last century, by a bishop of Grasse. While waiting for the horses to be harnessed, we saw a delightful old couple at the door of the little inn, a regular Darby and Joan—very stout, very good-looking, very facetious, and evidently very fond of each other. Many were the witticisms of the old man at the expense of his wife, and bright and broad were her smiles of approval and admiration. It is amusing to see how universal is the “Monsieur”



and “Madame” in a rank of life where the parties always thus addressed here, would, in our country, be known simply as “Mary” and “Thomas,” both among themselves, and those higher as well as lower. We saw another very picturesque old woman, daintily dressed in a white jacket, a light-blue petticoat, red striped pockets, pink handkerchief, and black hat. In going home, we passed Pegamos, a small village, with a chapel and a handsome modern château or villa, belonging to the Comte de Drey. Between Auribeau and our old quarters, the Château Ste. Marguerite, lay the old Roman road, the “Aurelian Way,” which is said to have communicated with the Roman Bridge, and most likely did do so. At Auribeau there is an old arch, about which there is the usual difference of doctors, some saying that it is Roman, and others saying that it is not Roman.

May 19.—We have had another very pleasant excursion to La Napoule by water. We landed in a wild little creek among the Esterels, about a mile and a half above Napoule, whither we walked, meeting our boat there. The rocks of porphyry, the wild pines, the peculiar shapes of many of the peaks of the Esterels, which take so exactly the form of old ruined castles, that one can scarcely believe it to be a deception; a fire under the rocks, a few red caps and red scarfs surrounding it, and above several douaniers peering down, were highly picturesque accompaniments to the “seascape,” which is here so beautiful. About half a mile off we

saw a long, low, unoccupied mansion, commanding a splendid view, which we were told would be given to any one, rent free for twenty years, on condition of their making it habitable. I wonder what effect upon one's mind it would have to live there, "the world forgetting," and "by the world forgot,"—seeing nobody but douaniers and mosquitoes. Would it make one selfish, or morbid, or discontented, or misanthropic, or philanthropic, in the sense of being very fond of one's fellow-creatures when out of their reach? You know that it has been said, that "few people get beyond a bowing acquaintance with themselves," and very few have sufficient self-knowledge to know how such absolute solitude would affect their characters. Fewer still could say, with that noble Christian woman, who proved herself equally joyful in solitary prisons, or in exile, or in her own home,—

" To me remains nor place nor time,
My country is in every clime ;
I can be calm and free from care
On any shore, since God is there.

" While place we seek or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none ;
But with a God to guide our way,
'Tis equal bliss to go or stay." *

During our walk to Napoule, we saw many little pictures of wild beauty, which always made me long for Mrs. H. B.'s presence and pencil, and increased my regret that she

* Madame Guyon.

had gone before me to "Merrie England." One bit particularly struck me; two rocky peaks, between which ran our little path,—framed between the peaks were the distant Alpine hills of rosy snow,—above, a stunted pine,—and a foreground of rocks. We went down to the château, which, however, we had all seen before. La Napoule, in former times, bore the name of Avenionettum, or Little Avignon. M. le Curé Alliez, has an ingenious derivation for this name. Avenio, or Avignon, may probably come from *Ave Dionæa* (*Salut à Vénus*), the invocation which the boatmen addressed to a temple of that divinity, which was built on one of the banks of the Rhone. It is thought that there was a temple of Venus on the Mont St. Cassien, and the river flowing between might have suggested a similar name.* The curious conical hill near Napoule, was dedicated to Mercury, according to an old chart of Guillaume I., Count of Provence. The little ruined chapel on the top was, in later days, built in honour of St. Peter, and is now called San Peyré. The last seigneur of Napoule was M. de Montgrand, who had a very large property, extending, it is said, as far as Fréjus. His grandson was the translator of Manzoni's *I promessi Sposi*.

We returned to Cannes, lighted by the green, crimson, and golden lamps of sunset,—the fort of Ste. Marguerite was a blaze of beautiful colouring, and the monastery of St. Honorat, on its little promontory, looking quite apart from the island, was gleaming in the midst of the blue waters, like a separate

* *Visite aux Isles des Lérins.*

island gem. The sea was exquisitely calm, with a beautiful interlaced pattern of black, gold, and blue ripples, formed by our oars, and the departing sunlight.

May 20.—My last excursion from bonnie Cannes. We go to-morrow, and “last” would be an ugly little word, were it not that Scotland lies beyond it! Mr. Woolfield gathered a pleasant party to go to La Maure Vieille, which is deep among the Esterels. We went as far as possible in the carriage, and farther than any English coachman would have considered possible. We walked the rest of the way, each step opening out another scene of wild beauty—green and grey with trees and stones. Again, we saw rocky imitations of castles, and feathery pines waving above them, and lovely lines of green sloping pastures, dotted with placid sheep. There were the red unbarked stems of the cork-trees ; there were wild thyme and lavender, and our own bracken ; there were the sweeping shadows of evening which came on, throwing the rugged peaks into grander beauty of light and shadow, and colour. Even the slight expectations of seeing a wolf, or a wild boar, or a good big serpent, all quite at home, were pleasantly exciting little possibilities. There was once a village at La Maure Vieille, but nothing remains of it, and there is only a ruinous-looking farm-house on its site. Opposite to it, however, there is a little cottage, midway on the slope of that high green hill, with a few trees around it. It is there that the last Moor lived! Cannot you imagine him, with his

turban, and scimitar, and half-moon, stalking wistfully about, like the last of our respectable Highland caterans or “lifters,” and mourning over the good old days of fire, and sword, and plunder! Now don’t you shake your head with the rest of those odious antiquarians, and repeat, “On dit beaucoup de choses.” I am quite determined upon the existence of *that* Saracen, at all events, though it must be confessed that the dwelling of the poor old man does not exhibit any peculiar traces of Moorish architecture; on the contrary, it is wonderfully like a modern Scottish “but and a ben!” Dr. Whately, who was one of our party, is a geologist, and it did not take away from our admiration of the rocks to hear him explain their structure, and to know that those peaks, scattered in such fantastic confusion, were rent asunder by volcanic action, and that those curious basins of rocks were hollowed and curved by the attrition of ice. Fire and ice! wonderful and awful workers together in these quiet regions! The Esterels are composed chiefly of granite. There is a great deal of red, also some green porphyry, the former of which was extensively quarried by the Romans. There is also some very rich pyrites, and a few copper veins; a good deal of coal, sulphureous and not bituminous, burning like coke, without smoke. Agates are found in some abundance in the tertiary formations. You must be very tired of my raptures about these Maritime Alps, but I cannot resist telling you once more of the sight which feasted our eyes in driving home-wards, and to the beauty of which, the eye never grows

callous,—a long stretch of green country, the declining summer's sun leaving the air full of warmth and fragrance, the glorious Alps in their spotless winter garb. We met a drove of large, splendid bullocks, used in farm work, and each one a picture. Mr. Woolfield told me that there are comparatively few of them in the country now, for during the Crimean War great numbers were taken to Marseilles and slaughtered there, for the purpose of being made into preserved beef for the troops. They look as if they might be rather hard and indigestible. One certainly meets with traces of that awful Crimea, which are as unexpected as the rise in the price of candles during the war was to the old woman, who remarked, "Dear me! it must be because they fight by candle-light!" We finished the evening by an *impromptu* party at the Château St. George, where the Woolfields are residing for a time, till their own new house is prepared. It is the most covetable house that I ever saw—and that garden, with its endless variety of views! We paced up and down its terraces by moonlight,—the merry voices of little children blended with the gentle murmurs of the Mediterranean, and within we had the sweet sounds of guitar and vocal music. Altogether, it was a pleasant last-evening remembrance to carry away of my beautiful Cannes.

May 21.—We sail this evening, and watch the sea with trembling interest! I breakfasted to-day with Mr. Evans, and met M. Borniel, the father of the British Consul

at Cannes, from whom I obtained some of the information about Napoleon's visit, which I gave you in a former letter. He has an autograph letter of "General Bonaparte," which he showed me. It is dated "*Le 2 Fructidor, de l'an second de la République*," and is written from Nice to Cannes, respecting some military goods which he expected to arrive by sea from Marseilles. These commonplace touches of the real life of great men, so far from decreasing, always seem to me to increase the value of an autograph.

I paid a pleasant visit to Lord Brougham this morning ; he has been very kind in giving me books, and information about Cannes, which I could not otherwise have obtained. I found him in his library, looking pale from a recent severe illness, but full of his usual vigour and activity. If, as Kingsley says, "in the pettiest character there are unfathomable depths," how much more in those of lofty intellect and richly endowed genius ! "Henry Brougham," in his southern home, was before me, and it could not but be that many thoughts came unbidden. It is very interesting to see the scenes which have surrounded genius ; to say —here that brilliant mind created its brilliancies—here it struggled, and hoped, and sorrowed—here it yearned for better things than perhaps it knew how to grasp !

Lord Brougham showed me a large stuffed snake of the *boa* kind, which had been found in the Island of Ste. Marguerite, and he says many equally large are to be found in

the Esterels. Mr. H. T. told me yesterday, that he had seen, near Napoule, a very large one. He was afraid of exaggerating the size, but it appeared to him as large as any he had seen in India. In the forests there are vipers, but they are not numerous ; there are also plenty of scorpions. Lord Brougham showed me a satisfactory proof of the ancient descent of mosquitoes ; a fossil mosquito 12,000 years old ! They must have led melancholy lives, however, without the human face divine to molest and torture ! I should think that the good old mammoths and megatheriums must have been endowed with sufficient philosophy of skin and feelings to resist their attacks. The mosquitoes are not yet at their height of prosperity, but are doing pretty well. The other night, H. and I met, in a nocturnal wandering produced by a festivity among mosquitoes and their compeers ;—we had each a brown gauze veil tied over our night-caps, and were as horrified at each other as two ghosts might be at an unexpected meeting.

Did I tell you of the successors of the frogs ? Quantities of nightingales ! but they are not to be compared to the mavis and merle ; and as to their uncommon choice of hours, I don't think that it is more satisfactory to be kept awake by “jug, jug,” than by the “croak, croak” of the frog, or the “squeak, squeak” of the mouse.

LETTER XXII.

NISMES, HÔTEL DU MIDI, *May 22.*—Last night we left Cannes, which looked most lovely in one of the finest evenings I ever saw. As we glided on, the Esterels unfolded into new beauties every moment. We stayed long on deck, watching the various shapes of rocks and clouds—the successive blue, purple, and dun shades of evening settling on the hills and waters—and the bright dimpling smiles breaking out overhead—those mysterious intelligences to which perchance we shall go, though they cannot come to us. As long as there was daylight, there was sketching and ecstasies ; but all at once, and most unaccountably, they gave way to horrors and brandy. The sea was like a mirror, and the steamer perfectly clean and comfortable, but there was a peculiar little “joggle” which upset wiser people than I. After a night of utter despair, wound up by fainting, one was in no mood to appreciate the approach to

Marseilles, though I had been “cramming” for it. One felt utterly indifferent as to those fine rocky reefs and islands shining red and gold in the early morning. If under one’s eyes had been the locality of that terrible story of Rolland, Archbishop of Arles, who was carried captive by the Moors to an island somewhere in these parts, murdered, his ransom accepted, the dead body dressed as if alive in pontifical robes, and sent in a boat to his expectant flock on the sea-shore,—one would only have muttered, “Leave me to my sorrow.” There was once a fair young princess, whose father more than twenty-four centuries ago held a festive gathering, and gave her the choice of a husband from among a colony of youthful Phoceans, hitherto dwellers in a poor and miserable land in Asia Minor,—she selected Nestori, a Greek, who was offered by the chief new ground to build on, or an old *bourgade*—he chose the former, and the happy couple founded Marseilles, 599 B.C. If the very ghost of that fair young princess had appeared before me, I do believe she would have been indignantly waved off, as having probably forgotten how to sympathize with the woes of sea-sickness. By the time we reached *terra firma* at Marseilles, I was more able to look about me, but being there scarcely more than an hour, could only carry away a confused remembrance of an exceedingly picturesque and interesting place, though it is the fashion among passing travellers to run it down as exactly the contrary. I remember the forests of masts, the crowds of people of all nations, the peculiar

gay head-dresses and handkerchiefs (how I wish everybody at home would dress in crimson and orange!) the canopies of many colours overhanging the narrow streets—the market-women under their large white umbrellas—the fine boulevards and the picturesque castles and ruins.

I have long had a great wish to see Arles and Nismes, so I arranged to be left behind by my party, as they were all in a hurry, and to go on an exploring expedition with H. At the railway station at Marseilles, however, I met a most agreeable French gentleman, Monsieur P., a civil engineer. He knows Babbage and Lord Brougham, was a friend of Arago, and has met my father. He has been of the greatest use to me at Arles, where we spent several hours to-day, coming on here in the evening. We rested for a little at the Hôtel du Forum—which sounded Roman enough to please even me—and then set out on a tour of sights. We saw the amphitheatre, which was capable of holding 30,000 spectators, and is the next largest to the Roman Coliseum: that of Nismes, which I have not yet seen, is smaller, but better preserved. There are two square towers, one at each side of the amphitheatre, which, though out of character, are interesting in themselves. They were built either by the Saracens, during their short-lived triumph in the South of France, during the eighth century, or more probably by Charles Martel, who expelled them a few years after. The columns of the first storey are Doric, those of the second Corinthian; but I was more interested by the vaults and cells beneath,

which form almost a city in ruins. It was there they kept the condemned slaves and wild beasts. There are the remains of a magnificent Roman theatre—two Corinthian pillars standing up in isolated majesty, and a few fragments and pedestals of their fallen brethren around them ; while scooped out of the rock are the seats for the audience. I am rather stupefied by sight-seeing, so I have only brought away with me a confused impression of the museum, with the exception of a female head of great beauty, although without a nose, which was dug up from the theatre—it is supposed to be a head of a Diana ; the Cathedral of St. Trophimus, a church of very florid architecture outside, and much modernized within ; a very beautiful cloister, with rows of small coupled columns ; and an obelisk, the only one, I believe, found in France,—it is not Egyptian, but was brought from the Esterels, lay many centuries in the mud of the Rhone, and was only rescued and placed in the centre of the Place Royal in 1676—it is more curious than beautiful, being mounted on four lions, and decorated with a hideous gilt sun, representing a very yellow round “human face divine.”

Although my ideas have not distinguished themselves by retaining or describing the antiquarian impression of Arles, I shall never forget other features far more rarely met with. Arles has always been celebrated for the beauty of its women, and I never saw so many lovely faces as within the few hours I spent there. Perhaps it might be fancy, as I had heard

that it was so, but I certainly thought I could trace their Grecian origin, for before the days of the Romans there was a Greek colony at Arles. These beauties are perfectly aware of their charms, and are wise enough to preserve a costume, which though most trying to ordinary faces, is most becoming along with their clear complexions, oval faces, bright eyes, well-formed noses, and splendid figures. Old and young wear head-dresses composed of a long piece of velvet, silk, brocade, or cloth, according to the means of the wearer, which is wound round the head, and fastened on one side, so as to allow a fold to hang down gracefully, while there is a small white muslin crown visible above. I *did* see it on an ugly old woman, and a hideous young girl, and the effect was appalling! But such sights are rare at Arles; and their head-dress one learns to think the prettiest that ever was invented. I assure you, that the market-place, with its white umbrellas, and picturesque tables and stalls, and its crowds of lovely women, was a most rare sight of beauty and interest. There is a great preponderance of black in the women's costume—almost always a black dress, and the head-dresses very generally so, though occasionally there is a coloured one,—and bright handkerchiefs and aprons are not uncommon. I was very anxious to carry away a sketch of the market-place as a remembrance. Not only, however, were my powers very imperfect, but they were further impeded by a regular mob of boys and girls, and even grown-up persons, who seemed hitherto to have lived in perfect ignorance of the

existence of pencils, paper, and Indian-rubber. I had to take refuge in a coffee and billiard-room, looking down on the market-place, where the few inmates were not so much given to a thirst for useful knowledge, and, guarded by Monsieur P. and H., I began another sketch in peace.

We had not time to see the famous cemetery of Arles, which is very extensive, and is still called Aliscamps ; its name eighteen centuries ago being Elisii Campi. *Murray*, that friend of the friendless, and memory of the forgetful, says that Arles was called the Rome of Gaul (*Gallula Roma Areias*), and it was the residence of a Roman Prefect. Constantine the Great lived long at Arles.

On our way from Arles to Nismes, we passed the old castle of Tarascon, which in its day has seen within its walls Louis xi., Charles ix., Henri iii., Henri iv., and Louis xiv. But its pleasantest memories are those of "Le Bon Roi," for it was a favourite residence of his, and was called, indeed, the "Château de Réné." Many tourneys and masquerades, and pastoral fêtes, and intellectual strifes in music and poetry took place there. I wonder if it was in this castle that Réné received the news of the loss of the kingdom of Naples, while he was busily engaged in painting a partridge—a work he continued with as much calmness and success as before the evil tidings !

NISMES, May 25.—We have seen all the antiquities of this wonderful place. I wish I could give you any idea of them,

but I can do little more than give you a list of "things to be seen." The amphitheatre, which is called *Les Arènes*, in the centre of the city (containing 49,000 inhabitants), is in very good preservation, and there is one distinguishing feature, which is not found at Arles, nor even, I think, at the Coliseum. There are a hundred and twenty projecting stones, in each of which there is a round hole for the pillars, which supported the *velaria* or canopy. Antoninus is supposed to have built *Les Arènes*. This splendid monument of antiquity suffered greatly, however, in succeeding ages. First, the Visigoths, and afterwards the Saracens, used it as a citadel; Charles Martel attempted to destroy it by fire, of which some calcined stones still show the traces; while centuries afterwards many citizens of Nismes retired into its protecting walls, which were strongly fortified, and took the title of *Chevaliers du camp des Arènes*. They built houses inside the fortress, partly of the débris, which hastened its degradation, and afterwards, when the Chevaliers abandoned their houses to the populace, there was little respect paid to the remnants of ancient Rome. *Les Arènes* formed a quarter of the town, of which the population was 2000, and where the accent was peculiar; and this village was not entirely destroyed till 1809, when fortunately there were men of taste to be found at Nismes, who could appreciate and rescue from absolute ruin, this interesting building. I shall not soon forget the sight of it which I had last night. In the Protestant church, I met an English acquaintance, who had just passed through a distressing bereavement.

This friend walked to the hotel with me, and told me many particulars of that noble and wonderful event, the passing away of a prepared soul to its prepared home. It was the most glorious moonlight night, the heavens so clear in their marvellous beauty and purity, that it seemed as if one almost expected to see the spirit and its dwelling-place up there in the pellucid heights. Close to us were *Les Arènes*, with their depths of mysterious shadow, and solemn arches and pillars silvered by the white beams ; and, still greater contrast, the music and voices and sights of a French fair awaited us but a few steps onwards. One is not permitted to forget the original purpose of this noble pile, for every Sunday there are still bull-fights held, and other spectacles and games of the same calibre, held within its walls. In the earlier history of the amphitheatre, there was not wanting a deeper interest than any I have mentioned. These vaults were consecrated by whispers of Christian faith and hope and prayer. Fugitives for conscience' sake sometimes took refuge there in times of persecution. In later days, the doctrines of Luther and Calvin were embraced with ardour by a great number of the inhabitants, which was followed by its usual consequences, stakes and racks and gibbets. The blood sown at Nismes has, however, sprung up into an unexpected harvest. It is the headquarters of Protestantism in France. There are 15,000 Protestants, who have two large, handsome churches, and a chapel. I heard two of their pastors, who seemed energetic, devoted men, and admirable preachers ; still, however, it

seemed to me as if there were visible some of the usual effects of “religion walking in silver slippers.” It was painful to see in churches, which ought to be witnesses for the truth, so many inattentive countenances, and to hear, before and after the service, as much irreverent whispering and chattering as we find among Roman Catholic worshippers.

Other places have amphitheatres, but it is only Nismes that can boast of a “*Maison Carrée*,” the absurd and inappropriate name given to the building, which an author has called “le chef-d’œuvre de l’architecture antique et le désespoir de la moderne.” Colbert wished to transport it, stone by stone, to ornament the gardens of Versailles, where, by the bye, it would have been deliciously incongruous ; and the Cardinal Alberoni desired to testify his admiration by having it enveloped in gold ! It is very beautiful, very perfect ; its completion is what strikes one most. There are thirty fluted Corinthian pillars—six at each end, and eleven at each side, counting the four at the corners. The capitals and entablatures are of the most rich and elaborate ornament. Still, this monument, though so beautiful, has not the interest of beauty ! At least, I wandered round it, admiring it greatly, but without carrying away the longing in one’s heart to see and study it again, which fine architecture generally produces. Who knows but it may have been a fit of perverseness, for sometimes the mind as well as the heart refuses its tribute to what one is ordered, by public opinion, to pay homage to !

It must be confessed that the *Maison Carrée* deserves great credit for retaining so much beauty considering the treatment it has met with, and the various vicissitudes it has passed through. It is commonly supposed to have been a *Basilica* in the days of the Romans, and afterwards to have been converted into a Christian Church, dedicated to St. Stephen, the martyr. It was then turned into an *Hôtel de Ville*—after that it passed into the hands of several private individuals, one of whom, “Le Sieur Brueis Seigneur de St. Chaptes,” made it into a stable! and united the columns by a brick wall!! Afterwards, in 1673, it was sold to the Augustine Monks, who used it as a church, but excavated large burying-vaults beneath it, which greatly endangered its safety. A granary for corn was another of its transition states, while in 1789 it became a revolutionary tribunal. At present it is a museum, with a few interesting antiquities, and a quantity of paltry pictures,—one fine head of our Saviour, and Paul de la Roche’s magnificent picture of Oliver Cromwell opening the coffin of Charles I., being almost the only exceptions.

The large tower here, called the *Tourmagne*, or *Turris Magna*, is a most striking object. It is a large, lofty octagonal edifice, without windows,—hollow within, and conical. Its date and its uses are unknown, and of course present a happy opportunity for antiquarians to puzzle their brains. Some refer it to times even preceding the Romans, and say that it was built by the Greeks and used as a temple

by the Gallic people,—others think that it was a royal mausoleum,—others have pronounced it a lighthouse, for the navigation of the Rhone, from which it cannot be seen!—and some have suggested that it was a treasure-house for the Roman colony. It was filled with earth for a long time, but in 1601, Traucat, a gardener, who had introduced the culture of the mulberry, took it into his head that there was treasure still hidden under the earth, and obtained permission from Henry iv. to clear it out: his search was, however, useless. A staircase to the top has now been erected, and the view from thence is magnificent, as the Tourmagne is on the top of a hill which commands the whole city, and a wide stretch of flat country. At the foot of this hill there is the building known as the Temple of Diana, built by Augustus—a very interesting and beautiful ruin; the Roman Baths for women are in its immediate vicinity, and now form a splendid reservoir in the centre of a very fine public garden. We saw an uninteresting cathedral, and two Roman gateways, the Porte d'Augste and the Porte de France.

The change of climate here is very striking. The soft moist air, though not, I should think, very healthy, is quite a pleasant change from the dry exciting air of the Mediterranean. I hear that it is very cold in winter here, and very hot in summer.

PARIS, HÔTEL DE DEUX MONDES, RUE D'ANTIN, *May 28.*
—The rapid journey north was strange, after so many months'

residence in the south. The olives, poor little stunted things, gradually disappearing from the scene altogether, the sun, with its rays comparatively veiled, the colder air, the greyer sky,—there was satisfaction in it all, for it was more home-like. It was tantalizing to see the white tops of the Swiss Alps, and to know how near we were to the “monarch of mountains,” without the possibility of doing homage to him.

Here I have had unnumbered woes—a round of shops,—a confusion of bonnets, crinolines, ribbons, and muslins,—attempts more ineffectual in Paris than anywhere else, to unite taste and economy,—a fashionable dressmaker, characteristically Parisian, with her hair drawn off her face, with all its full-blown charms,—all the magnificent mantelets and dresses of Lady Somebody, exhibited by said dressmaker, with gradually increasing contempt at one’s languid and unscientific admiration. Why *do* people think it a duty of life to shop in Paris? Everything is shockingly dear, and I really cannot see that there is any great superiority to other places. However, I had pleasanter things than bonnets and dresses to encounter in Paris. Who do you think I saw there? Signor Ruffini, the author of “Doctor Antonio!” J. will understand the delight of this when she remembers our reading that charming book aloud together, interrupted by smiles, sighs, tears, indignation, and sympathy;—what intimate friends Lucy and Antonio grew into!—how we hated the brother and despised Sir John, and quarrelled upon the knotty point of whether the lovers ought to have

married in spite of obstacles and inequalities ;—and then the deeper woes and wrongs of Italy calling for deeper indignation and sympathy. Ah ! it is no wonder that to meet the man who created such lifelike interest was a pleasure never to be forgotten. Signor Ruffini does not disappoint one, and that comprehends everything ; for it is so seldom that the author of a favourite book brings to one anything of its interest and satisfaction. Signor Ruffini lives with an English lady, and is to her as an adopted son. I shall not soon forget the sunshine of her face, with its snowy hair, mild yet cheerful eyes, and beaming, loving expression. I have also had the pleasure of seeing M. Mérimée again, full, as usual, of interesting information, and possessing, too, the power of imparting it in the most simple and unpretending manner.

Monsieur P. tells me of a good quality of Cannes, which I have not before been made acquainted with. He read in a journal a description of the town, in which it was stated that Cannes was celebrated, not for its air, or its views, or its Alps, or its sea, or its olives, or its perfumes, but for its “*sucre !*” The author had heard of its gigantic canes, and jumped to the conclusion that they *must* be sugar-canies ! ! How sorry I am to conclude these long journal letters, but how pleased I shall be if they have made you “realize” something of the beauty and pleasantness of a very favoured spot of God’s favoured earth.

APPENDIX A.

THE following are the various conjectures which have been made respecting the Man in the Iron Mask :—

1. Cardinal Richelieu having proposed to Louis XIII., that his niece should marry Gaston Duc d'Orléans, the King's brother, this so irritated the Duke, who wished to have her as his mistress, that he struck the Cardinal a blow, which was never forgiven.

At this time Louis XIII. had been married twenty-two years, and had no issue ; so that to all appearance Gaston would succeed to the crown. To defeat him, the Cardinal introduced a certain Count de Rochfort (by another author called *De Rivière*) to the Queen's bed, and the result was Louis XIV.

The intrigue being discovered by Louis XIII., De Rochfort (or de Rivière) was punished by perpetual imprisonment ; and that the lover of the Queen might remain unknown, he was doomed to wear an iron mask.

The whole of this story is too clumsy and improbable to require refutation.

2. *Sainte-Foix* having discovered, as he asserts, in *Hume's History of England*, that the Duke of Monmouth had not in fact been executed, but sent secretly to France in charge of three men who took him from the Tower, concealing his face *with a hood*, conjectures, that on reaching the prison destined for him, the hood was changed to an iron mask.

Inasmuch as the real or supposed execution of Monmouth took place in 1685, and it is known that the Iron Mask was at Pignerol in 1662, the conjecture of *Sainte-Foix* has no better foundation than the story of *De Rochfort*.

3. *Lagrange-Chancel* considers that the Duke of Beaufort, who, in 1664, had made himself obnoxious to *Louis XIV.*, was carried off by the King's agents from the siege of Candy, and sent masked to Pignerol. But the siege of Candy was in 1669, which refutes this conjecture.

4. *Louis de Bourbon*, Count of Vermandois, was the natural son of *Louis XIV.* and *Mademoiselle de Lavallière*.

He had a quarrel one day with the Dauphin, and gave him a blow, an insult never to be forgiven. He was accordingly sent to join the army in Flanders, where, according to all received authorities, he died of small-pox on the 19th November 1683, and was buried at Arras. But some authors have insisted that he was sent to prison, and concealed by a mask. If so, the death in 1683, whether real or fictitious, could not have applied to the Count de Vermandois; nor, supposing the whole story of the death to be false, could he have been old enough to strike the Dauphin in 1662, when the Iron Mask was at Pignerol.

5. The next theory, and it has many supporters, is that of the Baron *d'Heiss*, who states that the Duke of Mantua, having agreed to sell his capital to *Louis XIV.*, was persuaded by one *Matthioli*, his secretary, not only to break his word, but to join the League against the French King.

Louis, furious at not only losing Mantua, but at having the Duke his declared enemy, revenged himself on Matthioli, by having him seized during a hunting party given by the Marquis d'Arcy, at Turin, and carried off, masked, to Pignerol, from whence he was afterwards removed to Ste. Marguerite, as being at a more convenient distance from Piémont.

The improbability of this conjecture rests on the fact that the Iron Mask was, according to every account, always treated as a person of the highest consideration, and that the detention of an obscure Italian furnishes no adequate motive for the care and mystery which attended the whole imprisonment of the Iron Mask.

6. One of the most absurd of all the guesses is that which supposes the Iron Mask to have been Henry, second son of Oliver Cromwell—who died or disappeared from the world, no doubt without exciting any observation. But that he should have been imprisoned by Louis xiv., while his elder brother, Richard, was living quietly and undisturbed in France, is absolutely impossible.

7. M. Dufey, in a work published in 1789, and called *La Bastille*, quotes a passage from *Memoirs of Mademoiselle de Motteville*, to the effect that “Anne of Austria had a son by the Duke of Buckingham,” and he then states that the birth of this child, although unknown to Louis xiii., was discovered by Louis xiv., and that he, to preserve the honour of his mother, caused him to be imprisoned, and that to avenge himself of Buckingham, he instigated Felton to assassinate him.

8. The next account is from a narrative stated to have been taken from a manuscript found among the papers of the Maréchal de Richelieu, and supposed to have been drawn up by Soulaire, his secretary, and intituled “Relation de la

naissance et de l'éducation du Prince infortuné, soustrait par les Cardinaux Richelieu et Mazarin à la Société, et renfermé par ordre de Louis XIV., composée par le gouverneur de ce prince à son lit de mort."

The narrative states that the Prince was twin-brother of Louis XIV., born 5th September 1638, at half-past eight in the evening, while the King was at supper, and many hours after the birth of Louis XIV., which took place at mid-day.

There had been a prediction, that if the Queen should have twin-daughters, such an event would be fatal to France. When, therefore, the midwife, Madame Perronnette, announced to the superstitious King the probability of a second birth, he sent for Richelieu, who advised that if it happened, it should be carefully concealed. All who were to be in the Queen's bedroom were sent for, and informed in unmistakable terms, that whoever revealed the fact of a second dauphin, should pay the penalty with his head. No sooner were they sworn to secrecy than the Queen produced the second child, which was immediately conveyed away by Madame Perronnette, and brought up by her. She passed him off among her neighbours as the illegitimate son of a person of rank, who had paid her largely for her care of him. When the boy was sixteen, or thereabouts, an officer came to the house of Madame Perronnette, and carried him off to Burgundy. The boy bore so strong a likeness to Louis XIV., that his governor lived in constant dread of other people remarking it; but matters went on quietly till he attained the age of nineteen, when, one day looking over the contents of an old box that had imprudently been left open, he discovered a letter written by Anne of Austria, which revealed the secret of his birth. Among other circumstances, the letter mentioned the strong likeness he bore to Louis XIV. The Prince, to satisfy himself on this point, procured from the neighbouring

town a print of his brother, rushed with it in his hand into the room of his governor, exclaiming—"This is my brother ! and now I know who I myself am !" No sooner was this announced to Louis XIV. than an order was sent to imprison both governor and Prince ;—but lest the face of the latter should betray the secret to any one, he was made to wear a mask fixed to his head, but constructed in such a manner as to permit him to breathe freely, and to eat and drink without removing it.

His first place of confinement was Pignerol, where he remained several years. In the year 1687 he was removed to the Island of Sainte Marguerite, and in 1698 to the Bastile, where he died in 1703.

The Prince occupied only one room ; his attendant another, within the same part of the prison. No one, except his attendant, a priest, a medical man, when necessary, and the Governor of the prison, Mons. de Saint Mars, who accompanied him from Pignerol to Ste. Marguerite, was allowed to see or converse with him.

The story of the fisherman who found the silver plate in the sea, under the fortress of Ste. Marguerite, is well known ; although the man declared he could not read, and that he had brought the plate to the Governor the instant he found it. He was, as a matter of prudence, put out of the way.

In 1698, after forty-one years of imprisonment, and when he was sixty years of age, an order was received by Mons. de Saint Mars, to remove his prisoner to the Bastile, where they arrived on Thursday the 18th September 1698, at three in the afternoon. The prisoner was placed in the Tour de la Bertaudière, under the charge of Mons. Dujonca, but waited upon by Mons. Rosanges, who came with M. de Saint Mars from Ste. Marguerite.

The prisoner remained in the Bastile till the 19th November 1703, when the following note appears in the journal of M. Dujonca :—

“ Le prisonnier inconnu, toujours masqué d'un *masque de velours noir*, s'étant trouvé hier un peu plus mal en sortant de la Messe, est mort aujourd'hui sur les dix heures du soir sans avoir eu une grande maladie. Monsieur Giraut, notre aumônier, le confessa hier. Surpris par la mort, il n'a pu recevoir les sacremens, et notre aumônier l'a exhorté un moment avant de mourir. Il a été enterré le mardi 20 Novembre à quatre heures du soir, dans le cimetière de St. Paul. Son enterrement a couté quarante livres.”

In the Burial Register of the Church of Saint Paul is the following entry :—

“ L'an 1703. Le 19 Nov^{re}. Marchiali, agé de quarante cinq ans environ, est décédé dans la Bastille, duquel le corps a été inhumé dans le cimetière de Saint Paul, sa paroisse, le 20 du dit mois, en présence de Mons^r. Rosanges, Major de la Bastille, et de Mons^r. Reih, chirurgien de la Bastille, qui ont signé.”

It is said that after his death his face was entirely disfigured by vitriol, so that identification should be impossible. Every trace of habitation was also removed from his cell, so that when his room in the Tour de la Bertandière was searched in 1789, no mark or other trace was found to indicate who had been its inhabitant between 1698 and 1703. On examining also, at the Hôtel de Ville, the register of the prison, the pages which contained the entries of the dates 1698 and 1703, were found torn out of the book.

I have no doubt, that of all the conjectures that have been made respecting this mysterious personage, the most probable is, that he was a brother (whether twin or not is uncertain) of Louis XIV.

Voltaire, without however giving his authority, places him at Pignerol in 1662, so that, assuming the statement to be correct that he was nineteen when he was first imprisoned, and that being a twin brother of Louis XIV., he was born in 1638, there are five years not accounted for.

Also, the register of his death, under the name of Mar-chiali, states him to have been *forty-five, or thereabouts* ; whereas, if a twin of Louis XIV., he was *sixty-five* when he died.

These discrepancies throw some doubts upon the statements both of Soulaire (from the papers of the Maréchal de Richelieu) and Voltaire.

At the same time, all accounts agree that the prisoner was treated as if of the blood-royal—waited upon by the governors of his different prisons, treated with the greatest respect, clothed in the finest linen, and served upon silver.

W. BROUGHAM.

CANNES, 15th May 1857.

APPENDIX B.

“QUELQUES mois après la mort de ce ministre, il arriva un événement qui n'a point d'exemple ; et ce qui est non moins étrange, c'est que tous les historiens l'ont ignoré. On envoya dans le plus grand secret au château de l'isle Sainte-Marguerite, dans la mer de Provence, un prisonnier inconnu, d'une taille au-dessus de l'ordinaire, jeune, et de la figure la plus belle et la plus noble. Ce prisonnier, dans la route, portait un masque, dont la mentonnière avait des ressorts d'acier, qui lui laissaient la liberté de manger avec le masque sur son visage. On avait ordre de le tuer, s'il se découvrait. Il resta dans l'isle jusqu'à ce qu'un officier de confiance, nommé Saint-Mars, gouverneur de Pignerol, ayant été fait gouverneur de la Bastille, l'an 1690, l'alla prendre à l'isle Sainte-Marguerite, et le conduisit à la Bastille, toujours masqué. Le Marquis de Louvois alla le voir dans cette isle avant la translation, et lui parla debout, et avec une considération qui tenait du respect. Cet inconnu fut mené à la Bastille, où il fut logé aussi bien qu'on peut l'être dans le château. On ne lui refusait rien de ce qu'il demandait. Son plus grand goût était pour le linge d'une finesse extraordinaire, et pour les dentelles. Il jouait de la guitare. On lui

faisait la plus grande chère, et le gouverneur s'asseyait rarement devant lui. Un vieux médecin de la Bastille, qui avait souvent traité cet homme singulier dans ses maladies, a dit qu'il n'avait jamais vu son visage, quoiqu'il eût souvent examiné sa langue et le reste de son corps. 'Il était admirablement bien fait,' disait ce médecin : 'sa peau était un peu brune ; il intéressait par le seul ton de sa voix, ne se plaignant jamais de son état, et ne laissant point entrevoir ce qu'il pouvait être.*

"Cet inconnu mourut en 1703, et fut enterré la nuit à la paroisse de Saint-Paul. Ce qui redouble l'étonnement, c'est que quand on l'envoya dans l'isle Sainte-Marguerite, il ne disparut dans l'Europe aucun homme considérable. Ce prisonnier l'était sans doute, car voici ce qui arriva les premiers jours qu'il était dans l'ile. Le gouverneur mettait lui-même les plats sur la table, et ensuite se retirait après l'avoir enfermé. M. de Chamillard fut le dernier ministre qui eut cet étrange secret. Le second maréchal de la Feuillade, son gendre, m'a dit qu'à la mort de son beau-père, il le conjura à genoux de lui apprendre ce que c'était que cet homme, qu'on ne connut jamais que sous le nom de *l'homme au masque de fer*. Chamillard lui répondit que c'était le secret de l'état, et qu'il avait fait serment de ne le révéler jamais. Enfin il reste encore beaucoup de mes contemporains qui déposent de la vérité de ce que j'avance, et je ne connais point de fait ni plus extraordinaire ni mieux constaté."†

* "Un fameux chirurgien, gendre du médecin dont je parle, et qui a appartenu au Maréchal de Richelieu, est témoin de ce que j'avance : et M. de Bernaville, successeur de Saint-Mars, me l'a souvent confirmé."

† Voltaire's *Siecle de Louis XIV.*, p. 448.

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